" Where there is no vision the people perish."

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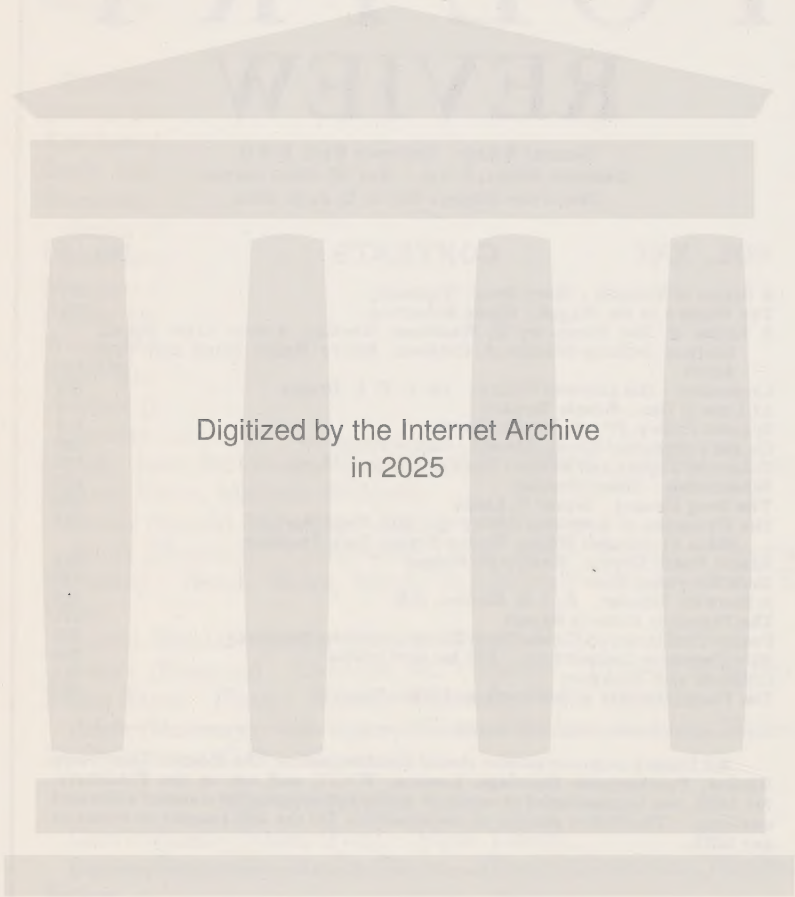

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A BALLAD OF TIBERIAS

THE tetrarch willed a city beautiful
In ancient Galilee,
Whose towers should rise to greet the dawn
Beside a violet sea.

Skilled artisans foregathered at his call,
And ancient legend saith,
Among them, with gray Joseph, fared
A lad of Nazareth.

Dream-dark, his eyes were full of mysteries,
Lovely as shadows are,
When dawn is near enough to limn
A tower beneath a star.

His heart was like a meadow that is sown
Only with tender things;
The sweet wild planting of the sun—
Flowers and light and wings.

Craftsmen there were, that came from Antioch,
And scornful men of Rome,
And one young lad, dark browed, who called
The island, Kerioth, home.

And Jesus shared his humble food with him,
And found the sharing, sweet.
"Our God is good," he said, "who gives
Honey and figs to eat."

The dark lad frowned. "The meat of kings
Is brought from distant lands,
And I shall hold a royal cup
One day, in my two hands."

Young Jesus smiled. "The tetrarch's cup is gold,
But all the flocks and herds
Drink from the cup of God," he said,
"Filled for the beasts and birds."

A workman listening, at his vine-carved stone,
Summoned the lads to him :
" Fill me this bason for my need,
With water to its brim."

" Your pay shall be two copper coins a day ;
Toil till the sun is set,
And you shall eat of honest bread
Beside Gennesaret."

The Nazarene bent bravely to his task,
With patient childish hands :
" My heart will beat within these stones
Where Herod's tower stands."

But dark-browed Judas listened with a frown ;
" There're other ways," he said ;
" I shall not labour with my hands
For scanty daily bread.

" Mine to command within a lofty place—
A temple of the earth,
And never shall mankind forget
The island of my birth."

What time the sun went down, a ball of gold
Plunged in a crimson sea,
A tired lad received his wage,
Who toiled by Galilee.

Then in his loving tenderness of heart,
He called his comrade up :
" One piece is yours," he said, " whose lips
Will touch a royal cup."

And still Tiberias is beautiful
That stands by Galilee ;
A town that heard a lad's soft word :
" Drink—and remember me."

MARY BRENT WHITESIDE.

THE WOMAN IN THE WAGON

SHE stares from out the wagon as
It trails the dimming road,
A huddled unkempt being, bowed
Beneath life's driving goad.

On, on through torrid summer days,
And chill of waning year,
On, on through miles of trackless waste,
Where grinning white skulls leer.

The never-ending grind of days
And nights—the dusk—the dawn—
A checkerboard of tortures where
She moves, a helpless pawn.

She stares from out the wagon as
She dreams of other days—
A youth and maid—a shaded path
Where fragrant hawthorn sways.

Her little hand, so soft, he kissed,
And smoothed her curls so fair—
She twists with fumbling fingers now
The wisp of tangled hair.

Back home ! back home ! her haunted eyes
Have long since ceased to weep,
She only stares and huddles now,
A broken, unkempt heap.

The lure of unknown lands had called
To him, her lover bold ;
Beyond the hills and plains there lay
A country steeped in gold.

The spirit of adventure thrilled
His man-heart—all forgot
The promises he made to her
Who vowed to share his lot.

The little home beside the hedge
  Where hawthorn grew—bereft,
Lone canvas-covered wanderings
  Were all she now had left.

Lone wanderings and memories—
  She was no soldier brave
In search of wild adventurings,
  Or desert lands to save !

She was a woman who had dreamed
  Of children and a home ;
It lay—her child—on bleaching plain,
  Beneath a pile of stone.

On, on the wagon creeps apace ;
  Her staring eyes a tale
Of tragedy so great no pen
  Can paint her soul's travail.

The stirring stories told of men
  Who fought and won new land
From its primeval enemies,
  Forget that in that band

Were women torn by pain and grief,
  Who stood staunch by man's side
Upheld by naught that spurred him on,
  Adventure—conquest—pride.

A woman's way, to long for peace—
  A man's, to long for war ;
A woman's lot to sacrifice
  For man, the conqueror.

The woman in the wagon fought
  Her silent fight alone ;
The grim renunciation of
  Her people—children—home.

Oh pioneers, you valiant men !
  Would you have stood the test—
Without the women in the wagon,
  Would you have won the West ?

CLYDE ROBERTSON.

STARS

FIELDS of yellow roses
  Bursting into bloom,
Woven into patterns
  On a gigantic loom.

Invisible barques borne slowly,
  And piercing through the sky,
Glowing, golden portholes,
  Night flowing darkly by.

Glittering, 'broidered tapestry,
  Veiling from the sight
Vast, far-reaching portals,
  Ablaze with blinding light.

Roses, ships and tapestry,
  Or latticed, shining bars :
There is no other lovelier word
  Than stars, just stars.

KATHERINE WASHBURN HARDING.

STAR THRENODY

OVER the barren hills, the stars ;
  Over the stars, the depthless night ;
Over the night, the soul of God ;

Ah-ee—desert—and death—and then—
Over the night, the soul of God.

ARTHUR CREW INMAN.

TWILIGHT STARS

AND, oh, the joy, the quiet dear delight !
After the summer sun goes reddening down,
And Twilight gently comes with jewelled gown,
To watch the stars in glory infinite
Begin their magic way across the night.
There burn the Pleiads : Venus wears her crown :
And there my Soul-Star signals fair renown
On the white highway of her wonder-flight.

Beauty is glad and waits in majesty ;
Her star-spun hair glows with a light supreme.
My soul sails out across the glowing sea,
And seems a part of heaven's unending scheme.
I hear the long-forgotten symphony—
Am I not one with the Immortal Dream ?

HENRY MEADE BLAND.

STARS

NIGHT'S temple is forsaken by the Day,
A sanctuary light now burns alone ;
The painted windows of the West have shown
No colour, this hour past. . . . What lights are they
In silence lit, as if there came to pray
A countless multitude ? For one by one,
Brighter than torch or candle flame, have grown
These crowded lights, ray upon far-flung ray.

Where the first star of evening swung on high
To the dim Sanctuary, unseen there came
A muted choir of angels, passing by,
Each carrying a votive candle flame ;
Even the souls of men—even such as I,
Who worship here in Beauty's holy name.

VERA I. ARLETT.

STARS

SO small the stars appeared—white twinkling lights—
Ere telescope, and spectroscope, brought me,
In blue, green, red and yellow livery,
The vastness of the interstellar sights,
Revolving in their lawful orbit flights
The double stars, the rings and nebulæ,
Eternal, infinite diversity,
Proclaiming God by starry plebiscites.

The vision of a Paradise ajar,
From this our misty earth, where doubt is bred,
Comes as one's eyes roam on from star to star.
While earth so sleeps there is no sound to mar,
And leave the wreckage of a vision fled
In which one stepped on stars where angels tread.

CARLYON BELLAIRS.

BETELGUESE

LOST in your far infinities of light,
What Titan planets wheel their age-old round
In giant curves through spaces so profound
Our years to them are as a single night ?
Are all things there more amply formed and bright ?
On larger worlds are greater races crowned
With nobler souls and bodies than abound
Near our dim sun of pygmy warmth and might ?

Or is it there the same old saddening quest
For walls and raiment, wine and bread and mirth ?
And do the strong there crush the weak at birth,
The shrewd the guileless ; in vain unrest,
O king of stars, that makes your wide-flung breast
No broader, after all, than this small earth ?

STANTON A. COBLENTZ.

MIKHÁYL YÚR'EVICH LÉRMONTOV:
A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND POETRY

I. HIS LIFE

THE years go by, but yet remains it in memory clear how the grey mist was floating hoveringly over the leaden waters of Salonika harbour; at times lifting slightly, it disclosed the dark-green crescent of hills against which white minarets uprose, lustrelessly gleaming: it was Christmastide. Yesterday we had held festival, but to-day our thoughts were eastward turned. Already the dim day was closing in, already the air was freshening, when we weighed anchor. Darkness came up the sky, but our way was steadfast. The morning broke at last; on one hand lay Europe, brown, bare Gallipoli; on the other lay Asia, the green hills of Chanak. Presently the azure channel widened, and the shores of the Sea of Marmora receded from our scrutiny into the hazy distance, and on the next day we approached the City of the Emperors, and there over against it we were stayed at anchor in the Stream. After a space we set forth again and proceeded up the quiet blue Bosphorus between grassy hills crowned with fair buildings, encompassed by the hush of winter's afternoon. Then, as the wintry sun went down blood-red, the gates opened on either hand, the waters changed from azure to black, and over a flaming road we glided into the icy embrace of the Inhospitable Sea, what time the pipers droned "Retreat." And all the fourth day we had no sight of land. But on the fifth morn the sun shone bright; afar off the mist trembled, and, as we drew nigh, were uncovered the peaks of lofty mountains, armoured in eternal snows—chill, repellent in their sublimity. In a half-circle rose they before us, ever and ever clearer. But see, at their skirts appear the foot-hills, and presently the whole shore is seen, verdant, luxuriant, smiling in its winter sleep, and finally we catch sight of Batúm's roofs and spreading buildings, and after no long interval we are moored.

Not many days later it falls to the lot of some of our

number to be sent forward into the heart of the Caucasus ; entrained, therefore, on a certain bright sunny afternoon, we rumble steadily out of the Quay station and proceed along the verdured coast amid tangled thickets of semi-tropical plants. A short halt was made no long way from Batúm, and there we watched a magnificent sunset over the dark waters of the Black Sea. Nevertheless this richness was of short continuance, for when next the light dawned we were traversing a bare, brown, depressing plain, hemmed in by gloomy foot-hills, beneath which crouched the dirty grey walls of Kutaís, once a glorious city. At this point we definitely turn inland, and begin the long ascent into the interior of the Caucasus. Soon the landscape becomes a monotonous sequence of bare uplands, bleak, deserted, haunted by a lonely sadness ; here and there a " road "—little better than a bridle-path—appears, no one knows whence, winds over a hillock, and disappears, no one knows whither ; at times is seen for a moment an *aúl** in a chink of the cliffs ; at times a solitary tower rises up from behind some eminence. Outland folk greet us at the halts ; wild and fierce-looking are they, proud and haughty of mien. Higher and higher we climb, until at length we pass over the summit of the railway. Another day comes ; we run past Góri and past Mtskhet, the ancient capital city of Queen Tamára the Great of Georgia, down into the broad valley of the turgid, brown Kurá, beneath hills enringed with hoary ramparts, until at last we reach Tiflís of historic fame, and our journey is at an end.

It cannot be denied that one longed for a poet's inspiration faithfully to record each detail of so wondrous a travelling. But, a little less than a century ago, a great Russian poet visited the Caucasus, and the marvels of that region are for ever enshrined in his verse.

Mikháyl Yúr'evich Lérmontov, of whom we speak, was born in Moscow on October 3rd, 1814. His father, a retired officer, was of Scottish ancestry, of the Learmonth

* A Caucasian native village.

family, probably deriving from the neighbourhood which gave to us our Sir Walter Scott; his mother was an Arsén'eva, but her he lost in 1817.

Mikháyl Yúr'evich was brought up principally by his grandmother, who lavished upon him all the affection that Death had prevented her from spending upon her daughter, but nevertheless his early life was marred by disagreements between his father and his grandmother, both of whom he appears to have loved tenderly. He was a strange, dreamy, wistful child, who loved "to watch the moon, and the varied forms of clouds, wherein I fancied her escort of helmeted knights." Whilst still a child, being very sickly, his grandmother carried him to Pyatigórsk to drink the waters, and there he first experienced the thrill of Nature's influence and the anguish of love's devastation—a passion for a little maid of nine summers.

After studying at home under several tutors, the last of whom was an Englishman named Winson, to whom Lérmontov owed his ability to read Byron in the original, in 1828 our poet entered the "Gentlemen's Boarding School" of Moscow University. Here he remained until 1830; his literary talent was greatly developed by the encouragement given by Professor Merzlyakóv, who lectured on the Russian language and literature. On the closing-down of this school in 1830, Lérmontov obtained admission to Moscow University, where he followed the School of Political and Moral Philosophy. He appears to have lived a curious, self-centred, hermit-like life, hardly mixing at all with his contemporaries, and yet taking part in student demonstrations; his time, too, was interrupted by a cholera epidemic in 1831, and in the next year he "migrated" to St. Petersburg. But, inasmuch as St. Petersburg University declined to allow him credit for the time spent at Moscow, instead of entering there he followed the example of many of his school friends and was enrolled in the Cadet School as a non-commissioned officer of Guards-Hussars.

Here he remained until commissioned at the end of 1834. The life was fairly well disciplined, but there was room for

escapades ; its influence on Lérmontov was of a negative character, in that his literary output was checked and diminished, although he continued to write *morceaux d'occasion* and to sketch out longer works. His character has grown unsettled ; he evinces a craving for " des bizarreries, des folies de toute espèce, et de la poésie noyée dans du champagne . . . il me faut des plaisirs matériels, un bonheur palpable, un bonheur qui s'achette avec de l'or . . . qui ne fasse que tromper mes sens en laissant mon âme tranquille et inactive ! . . ."*

After becoming an ensign in his previous regiment, Lérmontov lived the life of a man of society, frequenting salons and balls, outwardly gay, sarcastic and careless, but inwardly tormented by his consciousness of an unfulfilled destiny and of a neglected mission. To this period belong several works, some of note—*Sáshka*, *The Boyar Órsha*, *Branch of Palestine*, and the like.

In January, 1837, Púshkin† was slain in a duel, and Lérmontov thereupon wrote his celebrated elegy, which was at first well received, but on the addition of the final sixteen verses a scandal arose. " Slain is the poet [says he] who could not brook the throng of petty insults ; and now what is the good of tears, of empty praise ? Rejoice ye who have persecuted his genius ! A stranger has wrought this wrong, unperturbed, unknowing upon what he laid his hand in that moment of blood. Ah, why did the poet yield ear to the scandal-mongers, only to lose his life ?

" Silent have grown the sounds of the wondrous songs ; never again will they resound abroad ; the hiding-place of the poet is dark and strait, and on his lips there lies a seal."

Lérmontov, being ill at the time, was visited by a kinsman, with whom he discussed in acrid debate the duel in which Púshkin had lost his life. Irritated by the other's attitude, Lérmontov added the famous epilogue of sixteen lines :

" But ye, arrogant descendants of fathers celebrated for their notorious baseness, who have trampled beneath

* Letter dated from St. Petersburg, August 4, 1833, to M. A. Lopukhiná.

† A. S. Púshkin (1799–1837), accounted the greatest of Russian poets.

servile heel the ashes of families ill-treated by fortune's sport, ye, standing in a throng about the throne, hangmen of freedom, genius, and glory, do hide yourselves beneath the shadow of the law: justice and truth must ever keep silence before you! . . . But there is a judgment, a Divine Judgment, ye favourites of corruption, there is a dread judge; he waits; he is deaf to the ring of gold; your thoughts and deeds he knows already. Then in vain will ye have recourse to slander, it will not help you more; and with all your black blood ye will not wash away the righteous blood of the poet!"

In consequence of these lines, Lérmontov was exiled to the Caucasus, whence he was recalled not until April, 1838. He has left us a chronicle of his wanderings:

"After leaving Russia . . . I have led a wandering existence, almost uninterruptedly so. . . . I have traversed the whole line from Kizlyár to Tamán, crossed the mountains, visited Shusha, Kuba, Shemaka, Kakhetia, wearing a Circassian costume with slung rifle; bivouacked in the open country, heard the jackals' cry as I fell asleep. . . . Once, when crossing the crest into Georgia, I left the conveyance and proceeded on horseback; I climbed a snow-covered mountain (the Cross-Mountain) right to the very top, which is not altogether easy; from thence half Georgia can be seen clearly, and really I could not attempt an exposition or description of this amazing sensation; the mountain air is as balsam to me; to the devil with spleen, my heart beats, my breast heaves and sighs deeply; at that minute I need naught beside; I would sit and gaze there all my whole life."*

From the Caucasus, whence he was recalled, first to Nóvgorod, and later to St. Petersburg, in 1838, Lérmontov brought back the poems *Borodinó* and the *Lay of Tsar' Iván Vasil'evich, the Young Esquire, and the Doughty Merchant Kaláshnikov*, as well as the decision to transfer the setting of *Démon* from Spain to the Caucasian countries, to the "vales of luxuriant Georgia."

On his return to the capital Lérmontov again plunged

* Letter to S. A. Ráyevskiy, end of 1837.

into the life of society, in which he took little real pleasure ; for his proud melancholy despised the shallowness of his contemporaries.

" How often, surrounded by a motley throng, when before me, as it were in a dream, amid the noise of music and dance, and the wild murmur of set phrases, there flash the soulless figures of people, masks fettered by propriety ;

" When my cold hands are touched with a careless boldness by the long since untrembling hands of the city beauties—outwardly immersed in their glitter and vanity, I cherish in my soul a reverie of old time, the holy sounds of years that are passed."

He recalls the years of his childhood and the garden of his home adorned with a pool and dim avenue, and how he spent there long hours in reflection ; and clear is his present memory.

" But when I recognise the illusion, on coming to myself, and the noise of the gay throng shatters my reverie, an uninvited guest at the feast, oh, how I long to trouble their merriment, and boldly to cast in their eyes an iron verse suffused with bitterness and hate ! . . ."

Further, he was cruelly wounded by the marriage of Varvára Lopukhiná, whom he had loved from boyhood's days. In 1840 he was engaged in a duel with de Barante, son of the French Ambassador, and was again exiled to the Caucasus.

Here the first part of his time was occupied in fighting, and the impressions of the life of action are crystallised in *Valerík*. In 1841 appeared his novel *A Hero of Our Time*, which event was fairly well remarked upon, and also the first collection of his verse. After a brief leave in St. Petersburg he returned to Pyatigórsk, and here, amid the society of many friends, the presentiment of death at this time felt by him was realised ; on July 1st or 2nd, 1841, Martínov, a posing officer of the local garrison, killed him in a duel. " Beneath the awful tempest, by the flashing of the lightning, amidst the roaring thunder, this tempestuous soul passed into another sphere of existence."*

* V. Solovyóv.

Ia. HIS PERSONALITY

Before attempting a description of the works of Lérmontov and of the features in them which particularly appeal to the English reader, it is advisable briefly to sketch his personality. Lérmontov appears to have been the victim of contradictions in his character; he was conscious of his genius, of his difference from other men; but he does not seem fully to have realised in what manner his mission would be fulfilled, and he was depressed by the indifference of the general world to his distinctive qualities—in fact, he accuses his generation of inaction and purposelessness, as in *Dúma* (*Meditation*):

"Sorrowfully I contemplate our generation. Its future is empty or dark; meanwhile, beneath the burden of knowledge and doubt, it grows old in inactivity. We are rich when hardly out of our cradle in the mistakes of our fathers and their late mind, and already life wearies us, like a level road, without a goal, like a feast at someone else's festival.

"Shamefully indifferent to good and evil, in the beginning of our career, we wither without a struggle; in face of danger we are shamefully faint of heart, and in face of authority, contemptible serfs.

"So useless fruit, prematurely ripe, which gladdens neither our taste nor our eyes, hangs amid the flowers, an orphaned stranger! And the hour of their beauty is the hour of its fall!

"We consumed our minds in useless science, jealously concealing from neighbours and friends our best hopes and honourable speech in the unbelief of ridiculous passions. We hardly attained to the cup of enjoyment, but we have not thereby preserved our youthful power; from each joy, fearing a glut, we ever extracted the best essence.

"The fancies of poesy, the creations of art do not stir our mind with delightful rapture; we greedily guard in our breast a remnant of feeling—a treasure buried in niggardliness and useless, and we hate and we love by chance, not in any way offering sacrifice to malice or love,

and a certain mysterious coldness reigns in our soul, when fire rages in our blood. And the luxurious amusements of our forefathers are boring to us, and their conscientious childish licentiousness; and we hasten to the grave without happiness and without glory, looking jeeringly back.

"In a dismal throng quickly forgotten we pass over the world without sound, without trace, not casting to the centuries either a productive thought or a labour begun by genius. And our ashes, with the sternness of a judge and a citizen, our descendants insult with contemptible verses, with the bitter raillery of a disappointed son over his spendthrift father."

From childhood he was given to reveries and to introspection: he had a great power of impression-analysis. His life in society, divided between communion in secret with his soul's inwardness and the distractions of worldly gaiety with which he sought to chloroform his spiritual pain, tended to depression and even to despair:

"'Tis dull, 'tis sad, and there is no one to whom I can give my hand in the moment of my soul 's misfortune. . . . Wishing! . . . What avails it idly and eternally to wish? And the years go by—all the best years. . . .

"What are passions?—for early or late their sweet anguish will disappear at the word of judgment; and life, when one looks about one with cold attention, is such an empty and stupid farce. . . ."

Against this must be set his extraordinary appreciation of Nature: at times his descriptions of natural scenes rival those of English poets, and he always derived great comfort from the contemplation of Nature's phases:

"When ripples the yellowing cornfield, and the fresh forest murmurs at the call of the breeze, and in the garden the crimson plum lies hid beneath the delightful shade of the green foliage;

"When, sprinkled with fragrant dew, either in the rosy eve, or in the golden hour of the morning, the silvery lily-of-the-valley nods its head at me from under a bush;

"When the cool spring is playing in the ravine, and, plunging my thought into some dim dream, lisps to me a mysterious story of the peaceful region from whence it hurries;

"Then the unrest of my soul is quietened, then fade away the wrinkles on my forehead, then I can conceive of happiness upon earth, and in the heavens I see God."

And we should think that, although he showed himself an implacable foe to the vanity and emptiness of contemporary society, lashing all its foibles with merciless tongue and pen—yet no one not possessed of a sympathetic spirit could have written such tender and lovely passages as, *e.g.*, the last stanzas of *Branch of Palestine*, or *The Angel*, or the *Cossack Cradle-Song*, in which especially does this quality stand out clear; even as one feels with the "*starúkha-mat'*" ("aged mother") in the opening pages of Gógol's *Tarás Búl'ba*, so does Lérmontov invoke our sympathy with another Cossack mother:

"I shall give thee for the journey an image holy: do thou, when praying to God, stand it before thee; and, whilst making thyself ready for the perilous battle, remember thy mother. . . . Sleep, my pretty babe, hush-a-by, a-by."

C. P. L. DENNIS.

[*Part II. His Poetry, will appear in the next issue*]

AT LINN OF DEE

ONE lonely pine tree, from its rocky ledge
Sees circling onyx waters slowly swirled,
Where winds make music on the shelving edge
Of pools, that hold the darkness of the world!
And uncaught melodies, eluding reach,
Diffuse their formless rapture in the spray,
And ungrasped beauty, past all power of speech,
Gleaming a moment, passes on its way,
Bewildering mind and spirit; yet so clear
A presence, from the inner beauty caught;
A dominant that breaks upon the ear,
But cannot force the entrance gates of thought!

MINNIE STEPHEN.

ESPRONCEDA. II.

ESPRONCEDA'S patriotic odes, and the striking group of *Canciones*,—*The Pirate's Song*, *The Cossack's Song*, *The Beggar*, *The Hangman*, were the prelude to his distinctive and enduring work in poetic drama. These songs, a transition from emotional fervour to conscious power, were written about 1835. Four years later, after Teresa had left him, appeared the work which gave him a place in the poetic Valhalla—*El Estudiante de Salamanca* ("The Student of Salamanca"). Well known in Spain, it is almost unknown in England, and a synopsis, with extracts from the text, will be of interest. The poem is written entirely in rhyme, of varying forms.

The scene opens in a deserted street of Salamanca. It is midnight. The cloaked figure of a man is seen, stealing along in the darkness. He crosses the street, and disappears in the shadow of a church wall, in which there is a shrine.

A steep and narrow street,
The Street of Coffins hight,
As if a pall of crape
Upon it laid a blight;
Shrouded in endless gloom
No ray pierced through its night,
Save where the faint lamp made
The image of Jesus bright.
Here the cloaked figure passed,
His sword held ever in sight,
Whose blade reflections caught
From the sacred lantern's light.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

He was a second Don Juan Tenorio, fierce and insolent, brave, haughty, impious and unbelieving—a student at the University of Salamanca, where he was famous as much for his evil life as for his personal beauty. His name was Don Félix de Montemar. His latest infamy was the betrayal, and desertion, of a beautiful and innocent girl, Doña Elvira de Pastrana, who, upon discovering her lover's falsity and final desertion, lost her reason, and died in her mother's

arms. In her last moments of sanity, she wrote a pathetic letter to Don Félix, from which I quote some of the most beautiful lines.

I am dying; forgive me, if my desolate cry
Importunately falls upon thine ear;
It is the last and lamentable sigh
Of her whose love holds thee forever dear.

I feel the icy hand of death draw nigh. . . .
Farewell! I ask nor love nor pitying tear. . . .
Hear me! Forgive, as from the world I go,
If anguish wrests from me a sob of woe.

Farewell forever! When my life was thine,
With joy o'erflowing glided every hour;
Each word from thee I treasured as divine,
They brought me heavenly rapture like a dower.
In thought, the fond illusion still is mine,
But, woe is me, vanished is all its power. . . .
All, all is fled with thee, all joys depart!
Sweet hours of love, I bless you from my heart!

. . . . . .

Farewell, farewell forever! Only one
Brief moment I have to live. The fiery pain
Of love still burns in my breast . . . My sight is gone,
It fails and wavers . . . Calm me once again,
O Death, and still my grief. . . . Dying. . . . Alone!
Love me! No, no, forgive me! I ask in vain!
Farewell, farewell! I have lost thy heart and thee.
All things are ended in this world for me.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

The scene passes to a room in a gambling house. Six men are playing, when Don Félix comes in. He joins them; throws the dice, and loses all his money and his jewels. He then stakes a portrait of Elvira, set in diamonds, that he carries, and loses it. Still the play continues, when suddenly a man enters, with his cloak pulled over his eyes like a disguise. It is Don Diego Pastrana, brother of the unhappy Elvira.

Pale was his face, and frowning was his mien,
Grim was his gaze, sadly his brow was bent;
In his stern bearing was his purpose seen—
To kill, or to be killed, was his intent.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

He says nothing, but looks sternly at Don Félix, who, with a sarcastic glance, addresses him. A violent dialogue ensues, and at last Don Diego, enraged, uncloaks himself, saying: "Don Félix, do you not know Don Diego de Pastrana?" Don Félix denies his acquaintance, but observes, carelessly, that he had once known Don Diego's sister.

Don Diego: Do you not know that she is dead?
Don Félix (*with mock sympathy*): God rest her soul!
Don Diego: You know her story, and the cause of her death.
Don Félix (*sneeringly*): A fever, perhaps?
Don Diego: You liar!
Don Félix: Calm yourself, Don Diego! If she is dead, she is dead.
She won't come to life again!

Infuriated, Don Diego draws his sword. The gamblers cry "Don't fight here! Go away!" The two men go out.

The next scene shows us Don Félix again walking along the Street of Coffins. He has killed Don Diego in their duel, and his sword is still wet with blood. Suddenly he hears a sigh, close at hand. He gives an unconscious start, for no one is to be seen, but in a moment he regains his composure. "Who is there?" he asks. There is no reply, but now he perceives the phantom figure of a woman, veiled in white, coming towards him. "God is trying to frighten me," he says, and adds, with a laugh; "But if it is the devil himself, I will show him who I am." At this instant the lamp before the image of Christ flares up, and he sees the veiled woman kneeling before the shrine. As he approaches, both shrine and woman seem to move away from him; if he pauses, they pause; if he hastens his steps they also hasten; now he stops short; they stop, and in that one stable moment he snatches with insolent hand the lamp from its socket, and turns it full on the face of the

woman. Instantly it is extinguished, and the white lady falls once more on her knees. He speaks :

What ! Never a word ? 'Tis very clear
My company you do not need—
You are probably a spinster sere,
And pious ! A merry jest indeed !

Madam, your silence is in vain,
Useless to make the signal " No " ;
It shall be " Yes," this I ordain,
And I will follow where you go.

Whatever your goal may be, I swear
I will discover it, and your name,
And whether you are foul or fair—
And though impossible my claim.

Though you were Satan, duly signed
With hoofs and horns and flames as well,
Right through the open gates of hell,
You in front, and I behind.

By God ! we should pass, together still !
To thwart me though high heaven aspire
'Twill be in vain, for my desire
I must assuage, even 'gainst your will.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

Her only answer is a heartbreaking sigh.

" If you seek an ungrateful lover, madam, allow me to offer myself as his substitute. Your shyness is a *pose*—or perhaps you have a jealous husband ? . . . Have I guessed right ? . . . Oh ! you drive me mad ! If you persist in this silence . . . Well, Queen of my heart, with dumb people I don't talk—I act ! "

The words are still on his lips when he hears a soft voice, like the echo of a distant melody, and the veiled lady murmurs :

For me the end of love has come at last,
All things are ended in this world for me ;
From every earthly tie that bound me fast
Heaven forevermore has set me free.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

" All things are ended in this world for me "—the closing words of Elvira's farewell to Don Félix. They mean nothing to him. His faithless mind holds no memory of the letter written with the blood of a faithful heart. He is only the more determined to carry his adventure to its desired end. Again the vision speaks :

* * * There is danger in following me.
DON FÉLIX : That does not deter me.
* * * You will regret it, later, it may be.
DON FÉLIX : I may perhaps regret it for your sake.
* * * You offend heaven !
DON FÉLIX : I put my trust in the devil !
* * * Hush ! Do not tempt God !
DON FÉLIX : Your indifference only increases my ardour. If God is offended He will be wrong. Let me once hold you in my arms and God may kill me afterwards.
* * * Your last hour is drawing near. Put aside, Don Félix, all earthly desires.
DON FÉLIX : Ha ! She knows me !
* * * Tremble for yourself, tremble, lest earthly bliss be exchanged for eternal pain.
DON FÉLIX : Enough of sermons ! Keep them for Lent. Let us talk of love—it has a sweeter sound. If I should die tomorrow, what do I care ? I enjoy the moment—the devil may have me when the end comes !
* * * My God, Thy will be done !

And now begins a strange journey. They pass through mean streets and solitary squares. The dead rise from their graves and their hollow footsteps echo in the silence. Salamanca is like a dead city. There is heard the ominous sound of the rising wind.

On they go, on and on.

Montemar begins to feel confused. They seem to be in another city whose strange, fantastic towers sway, rise from their foundations and join him and his companion. The bells of the mysterious towers ring a weird chime. . . . Again he recognises Salamanca, and he attributes his momentary delusions to the wine he has drunk.

A funeral procession approaches. There are two bodies on the bier. Don Félix steps forward, curious, to see the

faces of the dead. One is Don Diego de Pastrana. The other—O God!—is himself! He speaks to the bearers, not trusting his senses: "Tell me, who are you burying? Don Diego de Pastrana, I know—but the other?"

"It is Don Félix de Montemar, the Student of Salamanca," is the reply.

For a moment his nerves are shaken, but he recovers himself and pours forth a blasphemous tirade. The veiled figure speaks:

"Don Félix, does not your heart warn you that you are treading the pathway of death?" Don Félix, unmoved, places his hand on the hilt of his sword for answer.

On they go, on and on.

They come to a portal. The veiled lady knocks. The doors fly open as if by magic. She enters, Don Félix follows. There are no pages or attendants. Under the flickering light of a few tapers, they cross empty galleries. Ruined arches are on every side, sepulchral urns, broken columns, courtyards overgrown with decaying moss, sad, damp, dark. Fantastic, shadowy figures fix Don Félix with their sunken eyes, which glow in the distance like coals of fire. Their angry looks seem to resent his intrusion upon their sombre abode.

They begin to descend a winding staircase. At the end of the descent Don Félix loses consciousness. When he recovers himself, he is alone with the veiled figure in a gloomy hall, and he sees that she is seated at the foot of a monument.

Solemn music is heard. A mysterious murmur, at first faint and distant, increases to a terrifying violence. The hall rocks upon its foundations. A hundred spectres rise, fasten their empty sockets upon Don Félix, and thrust their bony fingers into his flesh.

The veiled figure places her hand in his. He tries in vain to escape from its icy grasp. She flings her arms round him. Terrible words re-echo through the hall:

"It is her husband! The wife has found her husband at last!"

The spectres shout with joy: "He is the husband of an eternal love!" Don Félix lifts the white veil. . . . A ghastly skeleton! . . . The betrayed Elvira!

She holds Don Félix in an embrace from which he cannot free himself, and they begin to dance. All the spectres dance round them, singing an ironical bridal song. All is dim, confused. . . .

. . . . . .

Dawn breaks in Salamanca. Her ancient towers are gilded with the rays of the rising sun. All is bathed in celestial peace and happiness. Night has fled, and with it all the foolish visions and imaginations of the night. Men go forth to their work; the quiet daily round begins.

. . . . . .

It was common knowledge that the devil in the form of a woman, mysteriously veiled, had come that night to Salamanca to fetch the soul of Don Félix de Montemar. And, says Espronceda, "if any reader wishes an explanation of the story: 'I tell the tale as it was told to me.'"

The varying metres in which the drama is written make it truly a symphonic poem. I must quote one of the lyrics which does not find a place in the synopsis. It opens the Second Part of the drama, and precedes some descriptive and reflective lines upon Elvira's tragedy. It is a lyric of beauty and innocence, the prelude to a grievous story:

It is a night serene
With mighty stars ablaze,
The blue sky seems a veil
Transparent 'neath their rays.

The melancholy moon
Climbs slowly up the sky;
Over the crested hills
Scarce peeps her visage shy.

She, pure and lonely one,
Lights the horizon's verge,
And in her radiance soft
Doth earth and heaven merge.

The little rivulet glides,
A ribbon of silver sheen,
Under the moon's clear light,
Through meadows emerald-green.

Amongst the darkling trees
Silvery sparkles creep,
And on the breast of the flowers
The evening breezes sleep.

Now, waking, they unfold
Their wings, soft fluttering;
The orange-flower they rock,
The sweet acacia swing.

They ruffle branch and bloom,
They are drenched in fragrant dew. . . .
It is a night serene
Like the one creation knew

When the beating of angels' wings
Fanned the first lovers' sighs
To the first flame of love
In the first paradise.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

The simplicity of this lyric is its beauty. Beauty, Simplicity. The two words are the keynotes of Espronceda's poetry. His character was both simple and passionate. Passionate poets are seldom simple, nor are simple poets often passionate. Espronceda's simplicity differentiates him from the English poets amongst whom he belongs—Byron, Shelley, Keats; as his passionate force estranges him from Blake or Wordsworth. By way of comparison I give the Spanish poet's unassuming sonnet *A un ruiseñor* ("To a Nightingale"). The Spaniards excel in writing sonnets with simplicity. It is curious to compare the superb *Ode to a Nightingale* of a gentle soul, with the quiet beauty of this sonnet, which is like a rivulet flowing from a torrent—a moment of peace in a tempestuous heart.

Sing in the night, and in the morning sing,
O nightingale, thy love to the woods asleep.
Sing, for the dawn would weep to see thee weep,
And on each flower her pearly dew-drops fling.

Crimson and amaranth the sky en-ring;
The evening winds that through the blossoms creep
Shall sigh with thee, for the vehement, deep
Sorrow of thy sad love, and lost hope's sting.

And in the serene night, where the still moon
Sheds her pure ray, thy songs the woodland o'er
Shall echo in a passionate refrain;

Whilst thou, faint singing in a languorous swoon,
Upon my grief shalt balm of healing pour,
And with thy soft note sweeten all my pain.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

A charming little poem, *El pescador* (" The Fisherman ") must have been written after reading Heine. The following stanza contains a quaint thought:

Far out upon the sea,
Singing, we two shall float,
The wind will add its note
With love and longing fraught;
And I will make you a gift
Of many a shining fish—
For you, 'twill be their wish
And pleasure to be caught.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

Two very characteristic poems are the well-known *A Jarifa, en una orgía* (" To Jarifa, during a debauch ") and the lines *A una Estrella* (" To a Star ")—the first, a ferocious testimony to the devastating results of ignoble passions; the second, a more spiritual lyric of a lost hope.

. . . . .

What is virtue? Purity?
What is love, and what is truth?
The illusions of our youth,
Lies that men to children tell!

Give me wine! Therein shall drown
All my memories, so that I
May from life bewildered fly—
In my coffin peace may dwell.

. . . . .

Always the same! You women, fools,
Invent for me new joys that sting,
A new world, new raptures bring—
Curse you! All delight's a lie!

All your kisses are but lies,
And a lie your fond display;
All your beauty is decay,
And your mirth a bitter cry.

Splendour of love is my desire,
And an ecstasy supreme
Like the enchantment of a dream
That, alas! I ne'er shall find.

'Tis the light of some great star,
Lures me onward, far and wide,
A will-o'-the-wisp, a lying guide
To me, cheated, wandering, blind.

. . . . .

Come, Jarifa; you have suffered
Even as I; no teardrops start,
But the anguish of my heart
Heavy in your breast has lain.

We are one in suffering,
Vain are all your tears, unshed,
For your heart, like mine, has bled
In an agony of pain.

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

Here we have Espronceda's "wild and passionate energy" at its height. Even in this sordid moment, disillusioned, desperate, in torment of heart and mind, the poet cannot keep beauty out of his verse.

The lines to a star are in a quieter mood:

Who art thou, star mysterious and bright,
Timid and sad amongst a thousand stars ?
Why, when I gaze upon thy trembling light,
Tumultuous beats my heart against its bars ?

Is then thy light the sorrowful memory
Of a pristine resplendence, lost at last,
When thou, like me betrayed, believed with me
Joy was eternal, which so swiftly passed ?

Perhaps thy pure youth with a dream of gold
Fond hope beguiled ; and peace and happiness,
Glory and love, thy soft ray did enfold,
When first its glow the quiet earth did bless.

O'er the first rapture of the first embrace
That Eden's bowers embalmed in ecstasy,
Thy light, perchance, a path from heaven did trace,
A magic guardian of love's mystery.

Tender thy love, burning with passion's fire
That moved amid those paradisal flowers,
Filling thy soul with ardour of desire
For endless bliss throughout eternal hours.

Alas ! How soon thy peace and joy were veiled
In bitterness of sorrow and of tears ;
Obscuring mists across thy splendour trailed,
Leaving but memories for the coming years.

Sadly upon me now thy light doth fall,
And its clear ray is like a piercing dart ;
If thou canst still love to existence call
It is a love that brings no hope to the heart.

Be thou forevermore of love and truth
The star ! Reflecting all the sweet content
That throbs in every loving heart where youth
The future sees with flowers and fragrance blent.

I care not ! On my lonely way I go,
By rushing winds and stormy waters tossed,
The sport of fate, relentless to and fro—
What matter, whether I am saved or lost ?

(*Tr.* E. C. H.)

In all his minor poems, Espronceda was but trying his wings. When their strength was complete, what flights, what goals! They carried him to the stars in *El Estudiante de Salamanca*; they bore him to immortality in *El diablo mundo*, his masterpiece, and one of the greatest literary treasures possessed by Spain. Its date is 1840, two years before his death, and the concluding article on this great poet will give a synopsis of the drama, with translations.

ELLA CROSBY-HEATH.

ON THE PROSPECT OF GOING ABROAD

IF I should go, I wonder, would the stones
That I have trod so many years retain
The faintest echo of my banished feet?
And would the walls that I have dwelt within
Remember still my pleasure and my pain
In days that were so dear and bitter-sweet
When the wind played his wistful violin
Through the old trees in fitful undertones,
Would leaf and bough, quivering and awake,
Think of my love, and in the listening street,
One summer night, repeat
My name all tenderly for old sake's sake?

Truth whispers to my soul, "Oh! foolish one,
These things are ignorant of all regret
And loveless to your love!" And yet I know,
Over the cruel barrier of the sea,
How vainly I should struggle to forget
The once familiar roads that rang below
My happy feet; there would be brought to me
Dreams of my neighbour trees, or how the sun
Slanted across the walls of this old room—
Ah! wood and stone, why must I love you so?
You that would let me go
Unwept and unremembered to the tomb!

NANCY POLLOK.

TRANSIENT VOGUES AND ETERNAL VERITIES.

MR. ROBERT GRAVES attempts to attain an altitude of serene impartiality in his brochure on the *Contemporary Techniques of Poetry* (The Hogarth Press). But several indications creep from the pages to reveal that this impartiality is but assumed. We, in vulgar parlance, " smell a rat " in the dedication alone, which is to Miss Edith Sitwell. The entire forty-seven pages are, moreover, more akin to the clever declamations of a quick-witted man to an assembly of admiring acquaintances than to the serious reasonings and investigations of a deep thinker.

He claims, by way of disarming our judgment, that he is the historian merely, but that, on such a subject, is hardly possible. He could have taken up the position of one who merely catalogues varying outputs of verse, or differing techniques, or forms, or formlessnesses ; but Poetry resembles the female body which remains eternally the same however varying fashions may deform it. If this were not so it would inevitably decay and disappear. Its appeal is to the intellect and the emotions, and on such un-concrete matters a writer is forced to be on the one side or the other. We perceive Mr. Graves's leanings in this matter when he utters the dictum that for the " Conservatives " in Poetry, whose judgments have their roots in Ovid, Virgil, Sophocles and Homer, " Emotion must be kept under strictest restraint. Squalor and Filth must be kept out of sight." At such a verdict Dante must stir in his tomb. Then Mr. Graves claims, as do most of the formless verse makers, that Shakespeare, were he living, would be a " revolutionary or a liberal." Are the Sonnets, then, formless ? Do they keep emotion under the strictest restraint ? To declare that the moon is made of green cheese does not make it edible ! And a beggar may snatch and don the mantle of a Doge but the wise will perceive the pitiful rags beneath the borrowed covering and will deny that such mantle is the lawful property of the thief.

But Mr. Graves has his happy moments, such as when he writes that " when the liberals (or Georgians) get really passionately excited or pleased or angered by any poetic thought their Liberalism vanishes," which is merely to say that poetry, even with those who strut as ultra-original, and who are most desirous to overturn all tradition, comes back to form when the writers are excited ; or " above themselves " as we might say ; but then a poet should never write unless he is " above " himself, or above ourselves.

Unhappily, however, he retraces his steps and quotes a " poet " of extremist anarchy in form, and he declares that he has " a great respect " for the lines, and that " to disregard " them is " not altogether a sign of mental strength and activity " (" altogether "

seems nonsense here), and here is some of this " poetry " which we are not " altogether " mentally strong and active if we neglect it.

" Words that cumber nothing and call exceptionally tall people from very far away are those that have the same centre as those used by them frequently." A Cross Word Puzzle is A B C to this ! Who are the " them " ? And is it necessary to be " exceptionally tall " to comprehend what on heaven or earth is meant ? What sane mind could do aught but " disregard " such a litter of words as quickly as may be ? But there is more of this precious stuff,—

" A soap, a whole soap, any piece of a whole soap, more whole soap and not mistily, all this is no outrage and no blessing. A precious thing is an oily thing. In that is no sugar and silence." One hardly dare insult the memory of Blake by saying that his Prophetic Books are " Readings without Tears " to this ! Is it anything save the sheer impertinence of a member of a coterie that imagines itself " mentally strong " because all sense and coherence and music are abolished ? The chattering of monkeys would be less obnoxious. Let us echo Mr. Graves when he observes that these anarchists of language " have perhaps moments when revolution palls." We piously trust they have. For, as Mr. R. C. Trevelyan says in *Thamyris* (Kegan Paul), " it would seem almost at times free verse is no more than an excuse for uttering futilities and ineptitudes that we should not have dared express in honest prose. The " technique " therefore of ineptitudes and sheer rubbish is negligible ; who cares if the red nose of the clown is the natural hue of that organ or is the effect of red paint ?

Mr. Trevelyan writes with gravity and learning, but asks : " Is there a Future for Poetry ? " He can rest assured that the Eternal Verities will survive the Vagaries of Transient Vogues. Touching on Edith Sitwell's *Sleeping Beauty*, which, says Mr. Graves, has the " inconsequent but powerful movement of a dream," he refers to Perrault's " original horrible tale," perhaps Mr. Graves may remember that Perrault was also one of these ultra liberals who contended that the moderns, of his day, were greater and better than Homer, Plato, Aristotle and the rest of the ancients. By all means destroy the old if you have a greater and better to put in its place. Age and custom are not of themselves divine; but to cast down the Parthenon and to erect a Cinema atrocity in its room is the work of apes and baboons. Even Walt Whitman came, in his old age, to confess that verse requires form if it is not to be prose, but Whitman had a vast deal to say that was deeply worth the saying. The Cliches of Revolt are not necessarily finer than the Cliches of Conservatism.

We demand from Poetry, as Mr. Trevelyan says, "the sensuous and decorative beauty of the medium," and that that be "maintained at the highest pitch."

If poetry is not musical, its only justification is that it puts before us "the great idea." This great idea is brought forward in Mr. Allen Brockington's new book, which is shortly to be published, *A Fool's Sojourning*. The entire beauty and originality of the motive is most impressive. It is, as the author himself says, "an attempt to elaborate into praise the life of a poor private man," and the actions of this man are told by the different persons with whom he comes in contact. He obeys instantly and without question a certain inner prompting, he forms no plans, as events happen he meets them. Mr. Brockington's book, *The Nazareen*, was full of beauty and originality, *The Common Epiphany* was somewhat prosaic in form; save for some lovely songs, both were deeply interesting as embodying a new view of life, common things, ugly things all passing under this view and becoming transformed. *A Fool's Sojourning* is deeper in thought than even these. We can only express a wish that Mr. Brockington would admit more of beauty and music of language into his fine and noble work.

ARTHUR HOOD.

WHITSUNTIDE

IN idle mood I asked a summer crowd
Of elms and beeches why they bowed and bowed
So reverently their topmost branches proud
As if to an invisible Majesty.
They answered, "Hush! the Holy Ghost
Is passing by."

* * * * *

I HEARD a nightingale,
Long ago, far away,
Telling her ancient woe
To evening pale;
Time's wrong, the overthrow
Of all things frail.
The sunset's glow,
The pomp of kings, gold hair,
The rose of yesterday
She did bewail,
And all the songs of nightingales that were
Long ago, far away.

HELEN REEDLEY.

THE SONG UNSUNG

I CANNOT sing to-day
Because the bees
Have borne my song away,
And loosed it in the mazes of the hay.
It stirs the silvern plumes
Of grasses guarding inner mysteries
Enshrined in secret rooms,
And drifts among
The little shadows in the clover blooms,
And passes on its way—a song unsung.

This song I sought
No strolling bard may capture for his lay;
It is the golden spirit of a rune
As yet unwrought,
That wanders forth in June
Among the hay,
Untrammelled, bold
—A thread of summer gold.

A magick whirs and booms
Where the brown bees,
Weaving the meadow's shining tapestries
The livelong day,
Have set their looms;
And lo! the song I sought
Is on a sudden caught
Up in the shuttle of the wind and sun,
And spun
Within the hay;
And now the meadow and my song are one.

Farewell, my song! 'Twere a discourtesy
To seek to follow thee about the hay,
To violate thy silver sanctuary;
And yet, withal, I pray
That thou one day will deign to come to me.
Farewell, my song!—I go upon my way.

HONOR F. LEEKE.

THE DYNAMICS OF AMERICAN POETRY—X

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY—BERTON BRALEY—SARA TEASDALE

TO those "listening in" on poetry, Edna St. Vincent Millay is among the favoured and fortunate. Born in the sturdy State of Maine, and young enough to carry leagues farther her birthright gifts, she has already fared far in poetry. A graduate of Vassar University, in 1917 she published her first book, *Renascence and Other Poems. Figs from Thistles* followed in 1920, *Second April* in 1921, *Aria da Capo* also 1921, *The Lamp and the Bell* 1921, and *Two Slatterns and a King*. Winning the Pulitzer prize in 1922, she gave an admiring public *The Harp Weaver and Other Poems* in 1923.

Miss Millay is among the poets who prefer that I make my own selection of favourites to telling us of her own preferences. The exuberance of Miss Millay's admirers is very compelling. One writes in regard to some magazine's apparent indifference to her rare ability: "Neither the magazine's pessimisms nor its enthusiasms have paid more than passing attention to the fact that Edna St. Vincent Millay was writing in the same world, in the same language, in such a way as to make all other utterances almost banal." And Arthur Symons has pointed out her "kinship to Keats." It would take a steady head and a crystallised purpose not to be affected by such unaffected delight in the writer's work.

It does not seem that we use the right word when we say "work." Miss Millay's volumes do not seem the outcome of anything so grim; though she touches the dark side of the picture often, the doing of it cannot be aptly called "work," for this poet lives in a world of her fancy and goes visiting in the everyday world each week-end, and as it were seems to say "This is so, and this is not, but these both can be made into Poetry"; and the note of horror often appears to bring her satisfaction.

Since Miss Millay gives me the choice, I shall choose

for the purposes of this review her utterances closely allied with the beautiful, and turn promptly to her Sonnets, which are after the Shakespearian form, and she ably weaves them in patterns full of sensitive beauty.

In beginning to mark favourites the book becomes *much marked*! Sonnet I:

> When you, that at this moment are to me
> Dearer than words on paper, shall depart,
> And be no more the warder of my heart,
> Whereof again myself shall hold the key;
> And be no more—what now you seem to be—
> The sun, from which all excellences start
> In a round nimbus, nor a broken dart
> Of moonlight, even, splintered on the sea;
> I shall remember only of this hour—
> And weep somewhat, as now you see me weep—
> The pathos of your love, that, like a flower,
> Fearful of death yet amorous of sleep,
> Droops for a moment and beholds, dismayed,
> The wind whereon its petals shall be laid.

And again, in Sonnet IV, rich and varied is her vocabulary:

> I know I am but summer to your heart,
> And not the full four seasons of the year;
> And you must welcome from another part
> Such noble moods as are not mine, my dear.
> No gracious weight of golden fruits to sell
> Have I, nor any wise and wintry thing;
> And I have loved you all too long and well
> To carry still the high sweet breast of Spring.
> Wherefore I say: O love, as summer goes,
> I must be gone, steal forth with silent drums,
> That you may hail anew the bird and rose
> When I come back to you, as summer comes.
> Else will you seek, at some not distant time,
> Even your summer in another clime.

In Sonnet X Miss Millay gives the note of homesickness and a touch of her Maine coast:

> I shall go back again to the bleak shore
> And build a little shanty on the sand,
> In such a way that the extremest band

Of brittle seaweed will escape my door
But by a yard or two ; and nevermore
Shall I return to take you by the hand ;
I shall be gone to what I understand,
And happier than I ever was before.
The love that stood a moment in your eyes,
The words that lay a moment on your tongue,
Are one with all that in a moment dies,
A little under-said and oversung.
But I shall find the sullen rocks and skies
Unchanged from what they were when I was young.

Very charming and suggestive is the poem *My Heart, Being Hungry :*

My heart, being hungry, feeds on food
The fat of heart despise.
Beauty where beauty never stood,
And sweet where no sweet lies
I gather to my querulous need,
Having a growing heart to feed.

It may be, when my heart is dull,
Having attained its girth,
I shall not find so beautiful
The meagre shapes of earth,
Nor linger in the rain to mark
The smell of tansy through the dark.

The following is a picture (*Lament*) of the everyday so well drawn by Miss Millay's facile pen :

Listen, children :
Your father is dead.
From his old coats
I'll make you little coats,
I'll make you little jackets ;
I'll make you little trousers
From his old pants.
There'll be in his pockets
Things he used to put there,
Keys and pennies
Covered with tobacco ;
Dan shall have the pennies
To save in his bank ;
Anne shall have the keys

To make a pretty noise with.
Life must go on,
And the dead be forgotten ;
Life must go on,
Though good men die ;
Anne, eat your breakfast ;
Dan, take your medicine ;
Life must go on ;
I forget just why.

Berton Braley

Berton Braley hails from the State of Wisconsin, and this Indian name has the following forceful meaning: "Wild, Rushing Channel." With many interior waterways and magnificent forests and woodlands and prairies, long winters and severe, and warm, dry stimulating summers, we are expecting to find in the creative work of this author the characteristic American dynamic qualities, and we are not to be disappointed.

Mr. Braley was born in Madison, Wisconsin, in 1882, and, after graduating from the Wisconsin University in 1905, he went to Butte, Montana, where he was reporter on the *Butte Inter Mountain*, and later on the *Butte Evening News*. During this time, he writes me, he was a miner in the Butte copper mines, having had experience during earlier school and college vacations in various trades—farm hand, office boy, legislative page, elevator man, Great Lakes deckhand, book agent, clerk, prison guard, janitor, gardener. The sympathy born of these varied experiences is plainly set forth in his many compelling poems on the man who works, both with his brain and with his brawn.

He is another examplar of the poets of America who come up through her various universities, of which she is the proud possessor of many and excellent, outside the very noted Eastern colleges. And as is frequently the history, Berton Braley also served on various papers in literary capacity. In 1910 the rare good fortune became his to be a free-lance writer. He served as special correspondent

in Northern Europe, 1915-16, in France, England and Germany, in 1918–19 Japan, China, and the Far East.

In 1912 Braley went to Panama and wrote a series of Panama Ballads, which were published in a number of magazines. In 1916 he was correspondent on the Ford Peace ship. He has published six books of verse: *Sonnets of a Suffragette*, *Songs of a Workaday World*, *A Banjo at Armageddon*, *In Camp and Trench*, *Things as They Are*, and *Buddy Ballads*. Here is *The Adventurer* from *Songs of the Workaday World*:

City of power and city of might,
Of plunder and passion and woe and delight,
The sound of your voice is a trumpet's blare,
A challenge that's flung on the palpitant air,
A pæan of battle, a taunt and a call
To join in the conflict and conquer or fall,
To thrust and to parry, to feint and to lunge;
So into the tumult I plunge!

I fear you? the city of opulent dreams—
Because of your vastness that pulses and teems?
Why, here are my hands, they are young, they are strong
As any two hands in the thick of the throng;
And here are my eyes and my body and brain
Alert for the glory and gold I shall gain.
So—fearless I face you, O huge roaring brute,
Besotted with splendour and glutted with loot!

What peril of jungle or desert or sea
Has more of a thrill than your dangers to me,
Or greater romance than the conflict that rolls
On your vast battle field of a myriad souls?

I cry you defiance! your masters and slaves,
Your wasters and delvers and dreamers and knaves,
I war for your palaces, pleasures and pelf;
I fear you no whit for I fear not myself,
I face you and fight you, nor whimper for aid,
Since you crawl to the feet of the man unafraid!

Here *The Miracle Worker*:

The dreamers of Empire travel in style
On a glitterin' palace car,

An' they look with a dignified scornful smile
On the kind of men we are ;
They pay us the smallest pay they dare
An' call us a " frowsy crew,"
But they know—an' a hell of a lot they care—
We're making their dream come true.

* * *

There ain't no medals run off for us,
We're tickled to get our pay,
An' there ain't no papers making a fuss
When some of us pass away ;
We're nothing but hoboos from hobo town
Puttin' the railroad through,
Cuttin' the cliffs an' the mountains down
And makin' the dream come true.

* * *

We haven't no time for the dreams ourselves,
We're making the dream come true.

Sympathy for the worker is again here in *The Steel-worker*, from the same volume :

Wherever new bridges are flinging
The spider-web skein to the skies ;
Where the steel ships are made for the business of trade ;
Where the sky-scrapers gauntly rise ;
Where the cranes lift the twenty pound girders
And the red rivets hiss through the air
From Chile to Nome and from China to Rome
The steel-worker's sure to be there.

* * *

Next week he'll be starting for Egypt,
This viewer of cities and men,
With his money all spent he is fully content
So long as he's moving again.

And again in *The Power Plant* :

Whirr ! Whirr ! Whirr ! Whirr !
This is the heart of the city's stir,
Here where the dynamos croon and sing,
Here where only the " juice " is King,
Where the switchboard stands in its marble pride,
And the tender watches it argus-eyed ;
Where Death is harnessed and made to serve ;

This is the shrine of the God That Works,
Driving away the mists and murks,
Turning the light'nings into use,
This is the shrine of the mighty " juice "
Flowing ever the long wires through
And making the dream, the Dream come true.

And again in *The Wop*:

The big bosses bear all the fret of it—
They are the fellows who plan ;
But the back-breaking strain and the sweat of it
Fall to the laboring man—
Dago and Russ and Hungarian—
All of the immigrant crop.
Where is the job we could carry on,
Save for the Wop ?

Mr. Braley tells me his favourite poem is *Tales of the Hot Dog Tavern*, published in *Adventure* in 1924, and his most popular poem is *The Thinker* (reprinted at least a thousand times all over the world):

Back of the motors humming,
Back of the belts that sing,
Back of the hammers drumming,
Back of the cranes that swing,
There is the eye which scans them
Watchful through stress and strain,
There is the mind which plans them
Back of the brawn, the Brain.

* * *

Back of the job—the Dreamer,
Who's making the dream come true.

Mr. Braley's *L'Envoi* reminds one of Kipling, and then we find he mentions his name:

And after it's done we kin set an' smoke while the good ship drives ahead,
And thank our stars that we ain't alive but only happy an' dead.

The pay will be all we've wanted, the quarters better'n we dream,
We'll touch at ports like the Isles of Bliss, where the lights is all agleam ;
Fer I know I wouldn't be happy a-spendin' my time on land

Not even there in Heaven, on the beautiful golden strand,
So I think the Lord will fix it so sailor men can sail
On lakes or seas like they used to, a bravin' the storm an' gale,
Fer as Mr. Kipling puts it, we wouldn't know what to do
Without no seas where we could live the only life we knew.

Berton Braley's conception of " If " follows :

AN IDEAL

I wish I were as trig a man,
As big a man,
As bright a man ;
I wish I were as right a man in all this earthly show,
As broad and high and long a man,
As strong a man,
As fine a man,
As pretty near divine a man as one I used to know.

I wish I were as grave a man,
As brave a man,
As keen a man,
As learned and serene a man,
As fair to friend and foe.
I wish I owned sagaciousness
And graciousness
As should a man
Who hopes to be as good a man as one I used to know.

I'd be a creature glorious,
Victorious,
A Wonder-man,
Not just a sort of Blunder-man
Whose ways and thoughts are slow,
If I could only be the man,
One-tenth of one degree the man,
I used to think my father was when I was ten or so !

I will end this review of Mr. Braley's capturing cadences with his truly lovely *The House of Dreams*, which will lead us to our next consideration, Miss Sara Teasdale's poetry.

I want a house by the sea,
In the drench of the whirling spume,

Where the wild white breakers boom
And the wind blows salt and free,

Bearing a song to me
Of the wide, wide ocean spaces
Of headland and isle and key
And a myriad magic places ;
I want a house by the sea.

I want a house by the sea,
Where the white gulls dip and fly,
And the " lordly ships go by "
On cruises of mystery ;

A house built strong for the rages
Of tempest and shrieking storm ;
A house to stand for the ages,
Sturdy and staunch and warm,
To shelter my dogs and my books and me—
And my Love, when love shall come to me,
I want a house by the sea !

Sara Teasdale

The poetry of Sara Teasdale is of delicate iridescence and the gossamer wing ! Feminine, in the last decade's acceptance of that apparently constantly changing quality, she deals with love and the unloving, its doing and its undoing !

There is none of the rapier quality here : the " Love me or you die " does not enter in. The " Love me or I die " is the dominant note in many of her fair and fond lyrics.

As we open her book, *Sonnets to Duse* (Poets Lore Co., 1907), we find *The House of Dreams*, and before going further I will give this :

Comparisons in Poetry have not the stigmata of unpleasantness as elsewhere. Since all of life is a comparison, to-day with yesterday, to-morrow with to-day, our lives with the lives of others in other lands, at other times, in Poetry which most nearly deals with the life principle, we must not fear comparisons :

I built a little house of dreams,
And fenced it all about,
But still I heard the wind of Truth
That roared without.

I laid a fire of Memories
And sat before the glow,
But through the chinks and round the door
  The wind would blow.

I left the House for all the night
I heard the Wind of Truth ;
I followed where it seemed to lead
  Through all my youth.

But when I sought the House of Dreams
To creep within and die
The Wind of Truth had levelled it,
  And passed it by.

From *Flame and Shadow* (Macmillan, 1923) are taken the following :

MOONLIGHT

It will not hurt me when I am old,
A running tide where moonlight burned
Will not sting me like silver snakes ;
The years will make me sad and cold,
It is the happy heart that breaks.

The heart asks more than life can give,
When that is learned, then all is learned ;
The waves break fold on jewelled fold,
But beauty itself is fugitive,
It will not hurt when I am old.

STARS

Along in the night
On a dark hill
With pines around me
Spicy and still,

And a heaven full of stars
Over my head,
White and topaz
And misty red ;

Myriads with beating
Hearts of fire
That æons
Cannot vex or tire ;

Up the dome of heaven
Like a great hill,
I watch them marching
Stately and still,

And I know that I
Am honored to be
Witness
Of so much majesty.

"IT WILL NOT CHANGE"

It will not change now
After so many years;
Life has not broken it
With parting or tears;
Death will not alter it,
It will live on
In all my songs for you
When I am gone.

The following are from *Love Songs* (Macmillan, 1923):

A CRY

Oh, there are eyes that he can see
And hands to make his hands rejoice,
But to my lover I must be
Only a voice.

Oh, there are breasts to bear his head,
And lips whereon his lips can lie,
But I must be till I am dead
Only a cry.

DEBT

What do I owe to you
Who loved me deep and long?
You never gave my spirit wings
Or gave my heart a song.

But oh, to him I loved,
Who loved me not at all,
I owe the open gate
That led through heaven's wall.

WISDOM

When I have ceased to break my wings
  Against the faultiness of things,
And learn that compromises wait
  Behind each hardly opened gate,
When I can look life in the eyes,
  Grown calm and very coldly wise,
Life will have given me the Truth,
  And taken in exchange—my youth.

That day is happily some distance away, since Miss Teasdale has many years ahead of her to feel and write before she reaches the exchange her poem *Wisdom* describes. Born in St. Louis, Mo., in 1884, she is the author of a number of successful volumes of poetry: *Sonnets to Duse* (1907), *Helen of Troy and Other Poems* (1911), *Rivers to the Sea* (1915), *Love Songs* (1917), *Flame and Shadow* (1920), editor of *The Answering Voice*, 100 *Love Lyrics by Women* (1917), *Rainbow Gold*, *Poems Old and New for Boys and Girls* (1923). These charming songs sing themselves, as in

TO-NIGHT

The moon is a curving flower of gold,
  The sky is still and blue;
The moon was made for the sky to hold,
  And I for you.

The moon is a flower without a stem,
  The sky is luminous;
Eternity was made for them,
  To-night for us.

THE GIVER

You bound strong sandals on my feet,
  You gave me bread and wine,
And sent me under sun and stars,
  For all the world was mine.

Oh, take the sandals off my feet,
  You know not what you do;
For all my world is in your arms,
  My sun and stars are you.

THE WANDERER

I saw the sunset-coloured sands,
The Nile like flowing fire between,
Where Rameses stares forth serene,
And Ammon's heavy temple stands.

I saw the rocks where long ago,
Above the sea that cries and breaks,
Swift Perseus with Medusa's snakes
Set free the maiden white like snow.

And many skies have covered me,
And many winds have blown me forth,
And I have loved the green, bright north,
And I have loved the cold sweet sea.

But what to me are north and south,
And what the lure of many lands,
Since you have leaned to catch my hands
And lay a kiss upon my mouth.

SONG AT CAPRI

When beauty grows too great to bear
How shall I ease me of its ache,
For beauty more than bitterness
Makes the heart break.

Now while I watch the dreaming sea
With isles like flowers against her breast,
Only one voice in all the world
Could give me rest.

MESSAGE

I heard a cry in the night,
A thousand miles it came,
Sharp as a flash of light,
My name, my name!

It was your voice I heard,
You waked and loved me so—
I send you back this word,
I know, I know!

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

RECENT POETIC DRAMA.

MR. Clayton Hamilton's *Conversations on Contemporary Drama* (Macmillan, 9s.) are the printed lectures which he delivered at Columbia University in the early part of 1924. He talks delightfully of all the leading British playwrights, including Shaw, Barrie, Pinero and Galsworthy, touches on the work of such foreign authors as Rostand, Pirandello and Maeterlincke, and gives a general account of the present day American dramatists. It is an intensely interesting book, especially to those of us who do not go to the theatre merely to be lightly amused, for he throws much sidelight upon the technique and personality of the playwrights concerned and also helps his readers to discern for themselves why some plays are good and others of inferior quality. It would be interesting to learn his opinion of the new plays under consideration in this article. He would probably have a few words of praise as well, though he judges mainly from a dramatic standpoint. To this magazine, of course, their literary value is of premier interest and importance.

The two Irish plays of Sean O'Casey (Macmillan, 7s. 6d.) are rather puzzling to a mere Britisher, for the Irish temperament, so thoroughly depicted in them, is in itself something of a problem, while the "wheels within wheels" of the machinations of the several Irish parties is more confusing still to an outsider. Though the plays are well written and very much alive, it is not likely that they will make much appeal to other than Irish people.

The Last of the Strozzi (Moffat, Yard & Co., $1.50) bears us into more literary waters. It is written in blank verse of a very high quality at times, though in some places there is an impression of its being a little forced. The severest test of a tragedy, however, is always at its crucial moments, and it is in these passages that Miss Renfrew's talent shows itself most markedly. The language in the prison scene is (to quote another reviewer) . . . "beautiful, passionate and intense." Maria pleads with her father, the Duke of Medici, who is forcing her to drink a cup of poison as a punishment for falling in love with the last representative of the rival Strozzi family. . . . .

> "Stain not thy soul
> With this deed, O my father! life's remorse
> Can never wipe it out. Be merciful!
> If not for my sake, for thine own. My life
> Will not be long. 'Tis slipping from me fast;
> Death will soon bear me from thy sight, and thou
> Wilt sleep with cleaner soul."

The Lure, in the same volume, is an allegorical drama. Here again are some beautiful passages, but the theme does not convince

one of its reality as does the tale of the vendetta between the rival Florentine families.

The blank verse through which medium Mr. Thomas Williams unfolds his French tragedy, *In the Hands of Men*, is wonderfully satisfying. It is far from being rigid, and he often breaks into prose, but the transitions are always apt and natural. Here again the tragic moments are the best. What could be more poignant than that episode in the last scene where the young physician mechanically plays the doctor over the body of his bride who has been lynched by the mob in a moment of ignorant frenzy ? . . .

" This was Leonora, Julie, Leonora.
Three minutes past, her little mouth could speak,
And now. . . .so strange, so strange. . . .she cannot answer.
. . . .Feel her hands, her little hands :
Never very warm, they have grown cold,
And all that evening-light's gone from her eyes.
It took a myriad years to bring Leonora
Down to the Earth. . . .God laboured all those years. . . ."

In *Palamon and Arcite* Miss Williams gives us a dramatic version of the *Knight's Tale*. She has recaptured the tenderness of Chaucer's telling, a quality that Dryden somehow managed to lose in his modernising poem. She has also added to her version a real Greek atmosphere and a modern perspective, while yet retaining the mediæval flavour. The result is not an incongruous but a very harmonious whole. She uses blank verse, heroic couplets and occasional prose as the action makes demand, and here and there are some very beautiful lyrics. Because of the general spontaneity and original treatment of the work one can overlook a few Elizabethan paraphrases, for they appear to be more unconscious than deliberate. Quoted below are one of the lyrical passages and the culmination of interest just after Arcite has received Emilia's hand as his reward of victory and has swooned at her feet. Palamon appears on the dais. . . .

PALAMON : What mourning sounds are these, edged like despair ?
That pierce my heart ? What is that gathering there ?
EMILIA : Woe's me !
HYPPOLYTA : Alas ! from the zenith of fame
He's fallen.
PALAMON : How ! Wounded ?
PERITHOUS (supporting Arcite) : Give it an easier name,
He's dead !

The song is from an earlier scene in the forest.

(One singing):

"Who has seen Diana part the verging boughs
On high Parnassus' flowery steep around her moonlit lawns,
Where with the yearning hounds aleash they range the startled woods;
Till in the blooming brake astir, the speckled hind uprose
And made their secret paths afraid that thread the wind-stirred groves?"

(One slowly passing through):

"He has seen her who has spied
The cold dew on Parnassus wide;
He who followed when he found
Where silvery foot-prints pressed the ground."

It seems an apt occasion, while considering the work of these dramatists, to make mention of Mr. Robert Glennie's small book of verse. Frequenters of "The Old Vic" are doubtless familiar with the young actor's name, though the poems have no bearing upon stage experiences. Mr. Glennie is not afraid of using a good variety of metrical forms. They are all well handled and stamped with individuality. The poems are thoughtful and beautified by many delicate metaphors. It is rather difficult to cut these from their context without "drawing blood," so these few examples must suffice, supplemented by a sonnet entitled, *To the Adored, who asked for a sonnet on the Moon.*

"And the lingering chime on the last low hill
Trembles to silver and is still."

"The light that crests the ridges of the Downs
Is keenly cut and clear as ringing glass."

* * * *

"I will not write you sonnets on the Moon,
Her mock solemnity, her ashen face
Inquisitive, that nightly prowls the place
Where I lie tossing like a feckless loon;
Nor on the Sun, at whose approach, aswoon
With faithlessness, she leads the rout
Of the shamed, inconstant stars, the first put out;
I will not write you sonnets on the Moon.

But since my heart is full, and needs must sing,
And since the Adored commands me, here's a tale
Of one more constant than her starry choice;
Of beauty worshipped in a mortal thing,
Holier than hyacinths at dusk, more frail
Than starlight on a pool; or a late hill-voice."

EVELYN D. BANGAY.

DOES BROWNING WEAR?

ROBERT BROWNING was born in Camberwell 113 years ago, three years after Tennyson, who died three years later than Robert Browning. Browning is at once more remote yet nearer to us than Tennyson. We are not asked whether he wears. It is as though his place in English poetry had been assigned and settled. His fame, his hold on the public, his influence on the later generation of poets are not subjects of controversy. His friends as well as his enemies have long been quiescent; whatever jealousies he may have aroused have long died down; they have followed Tennyson beyond the grave and have become more bitter with the lapse of years. It is not that Browning had neither fame nor friends. After the death of Elizabeth Barrett Browning he lived in London many years—in Warwick Crescent, moving to De Vere Gardens only two years before his death in 1889. From the beginning of that period, in 1861, he threw himself into London life; he made many friends, he enjoyed dining and wining, handbooks to his poems were published; subsequently Browning Societies were formed and multiplied here and in America. By 1867 his fame had grown to something approaching general recognition. A collected edition of his poems had a reception that surprised him. "This for me," he wrote, "who for six months once did not sell a copy of my poems." Academic honours, at first declined, were accepted, although no State decorated him, and when he received the LL.D. from the University of Edinburgh five years before his death he was enthusiastically acclaimed in the streets. Professor David Masson, his host, thought this popularity might annoy the poet. "Object to it!" he exclaimed. "No, I like it; I've waited many years for it." Yet the influence and effect of that great personality seems to have dropped at his death like a plummet into the deeps, while Tennyson's lived on to become unbearable to his minor successors. Tennyson was actually more aloof than Browning yet he was the greater national figure; he commanded the social and academic literati and even now his personal friends, of eminence and influence, survive and continue to defend him against his detractors. I mention this not in detraction, but to note the difference. Browning survives, as he would have wished it, solely in his work. He has taken his place besides Milton as the great metaphysical poet. And because that fame does not rest on pure poetry and because the present age does not, with Browning's *Sordello*, "at least believe in soul, is very sure of God," but is materialistic and superficial, we can well understand why Browning has passed out of popular literary discussion. Browning

as a social creature was distinct from Browning as the poet. He could not bear public prying into the intimacies of the poet's mind. He detested gossip about it, and was scornful.

> "Of goose born to cackle and waddle and bite at man's heels
> As goose wont is; clear cackle is easily uttered."

In *House* the poet asks, "Shall I unlock my heart with a sonnet key? If Shakespeare did it, the less Shakespeare he." *Shop* answers another set of hypercritics, of whom we have had experience in the Poetry Society. They would deny taste and feeling to all but a small intellectual clique, while we ask "because a man has shop to mind need spirit lack all life behind, All stray thoughts, fancies fugitive, All loves except what trade can give?"

We are not surprised that Browning is not the object of scurrility now—has not, like Tennyson, books full of idle, libellous, ill-natured gossip published about him still. Yet he is not without his literature. Last month saw the issue by Fisher Unwin of a second edition of *Robert Browning, Poet and Philosopher*, 1850-1889, by Frances M. Sim—a companion volume to the same author's *Robert Browning, the Poet and the Man*, 1833-1846—a readable book of summary, extract and quotation but with weaknesses, already pointed out in the POETRY REVIEW, and inaccuracies such as references to "Sir John Morley" and to Abt Vogler having been born at Wurzburg in 1879, fifteen years after the *Dramatis Personæ* volume, in which he figures in a noble poem, was published. And Mr. Arthur Compton Rickett has just done, under the title of *Robert Browning: Humanist*, a selection of Browning's poems with an introduction for Herbert Jenkins's Fireside Library (5s. net). By the way, the bibliographical note appended, which indicates that there is comparatively little Browning literature—we ourselves would be content with less, with the Letters, the Life by Mrs. Sutherland Orr, his friend of all his creative years and sister of Lord Leighton, and Mr. G. K. Chesterton's fresh, illuminating study in Macmillan's Men of Letters series—does not include either of Mrs. Sim's volumes.

Mr. Compton Rickett's selections are judicious and well chosen and present Browning quite fully as a humanist, the poet of men and women. His introductory essay is good reading although not as sound and satisfactory as we would have expected from Mr. Compton Rickett. He gives a judicious opinion of Browning's present position and proceeds to refer to Browning's "insensitiveness to criticism," which we know did not exist. It was impossible for him to be deaf to the cackle of the geese, to neglect and misrepresentation. He

defied public opinion, expressed his contempt for his purblind critics, was secretive in spite of his apparent joviality, and felt he could only express hinself indirectly through his " men and women," yet he was deeply sensitive to written and spoken opinion of his work. In a letter to Professor Knight a denial may be read as an admission. " I dare say that by long use I don't feel or attempt to feel criticisms of this kind, as most people might. Remember that everybody this thirty years has given me their kick and gone their way." Callosity is not produced except by pain ; if he had been insensitive he would not have become hardened.

What is more important is that Mr. Compton Rickett is inclined to exalt the artist at the expense of the teacher, or rather to divorce the two and allege that they are incompatible together, because art, in the modern cant phrase, knows no morals—the negative form of the equally foolish, worn-out claim of art for art's sake. (" What is art that it should have a sake ? " asked Matthew Arnold.) We have already exposed this sophistry in the POETRY REVIEW—in relation to Browning's work, too (September, 1923). Of Canon Ainger Miss E. Sichel said, " He looked at all things—art, science, literature —through moral spectacles and this tendency was bound to injure thought." What nonsense! as though art, science, literature were abstract things and had no relation to life, did not obtain their value and importance from life, and as though the artist and scientist had no personal opinions, and did not seek to express life, feeling, aspiration in terms of art. What becomes of vision if you see a tree or a spade or a human soul without any significance being attached thereto ? Art can never be un-moral ; it must be either moral or immoral. Browning had a better conception of the purpose of his art than his commentators. In *Fifine at the Fair* he confesses his design to touch the human soul through art. As Mrs. Sim points out, " he believed that the soul is responsive to artistic suggestion where naked spiritual assertion would fall on stony ground. His poetry, as he confesses in *Fifine*, although apparently counterfeit presentment of truth, carries deeper freight ; he believed that rakish art could play the missionary—would be admitted where pure spiritual truths would be unable to penetrate."

In this same poem Browning points to the final objective of art :—

> " . . . Art—which I may style the love of loving, rage
> Of knowing, seeing, feeling the absolute truth of things
> For truth's sake, whole and sole, not any good truth brings
> The knower, seer, feeler, beside—instinctive Art
> Must fumble for the whole, once fixing on a part

However poor, surpass the fragment, and aspire
To reconstruct thereby the ultimate entire."

In numerous other passages Browning, in his own person or through his characters, gives his conception of the relation of the artist to his art. One of the most comprehensive is in *Fra Lippo Lippi*.

This may be matched by this passage from *Sordello* :—

" Note,
In just such songs as Eglamor (say) wrote
With heart and soul and strength, for he believed
Himself achieving all to be achieved
By singer—in such songs you find alone
Completeness, judge the song and singer one,
And either purpose answered, his in it
Or it's in him : while from true works . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . escapes there still
Some proof, the singer's proper life was 'neath
The life his song exhibits, this a sheath
To that ; a passion and a knowledge far
Transcending these, majestic as they are,
Smouldered."

Browning, as the poet of Nature, is touched on and illustrated by Mr. Compton Rickett in a limited and somewhat contradictory fashion. He is represented as being fond of Nature in the gargoyle way and in flamboyant mood while " the sublime aspects of Nature leave him indifferent." Browning, however, in his treatment of Nature, whether the earthquake or the still small voice, showed himself to be like Karshish, " the picker up of learning's crumbs, the not-incurious in God's handiwork," and he was never satisfied by the merely superficial aspect but saw cause and reason behind every manifestation. Much has been written, supported by a wealth of examples, about the extent and accuracy of Tennyson's observations of nature, but little has been said with respect to the similar qualities in Browning. He misses little of morning's manifestations in *Pippa's Song*, he notes the thrush sings each song twice over, and describes the fields " rough with hoary dew," the otter " black-wet, lithe as a leech," the jerboa " half-bird and half-mouse," and can match Tennyson himself with " night has its first, supreme, forsaken star."

Nevertheless, it is not as a poet of Nature that we would present Browning—of nature in its narrower limited conception of natural scenery, beast and bird and flower. The human drama attracted

him ; he is the poet of men and women, of their souls, their struggles, exaltations, agonies, ranking with Shakespeare in this respect. He had all the qualities, demanded by Captain Foxcroft—applied observation, expression, humour, sympathy, the ability to see life steadily and see it whole and present it vividly, unhampered by the subjectivity that is the bane of the minor poet. Perhaps too sweeping, as paradoxes generally are, but containing an arresting truth that cannot be denied, is Mr. Compton Rickett's assertion that " despite the explosive energy of Browning that led him to the dramatic form he was not really interested in action at all but in reaction—the result of action on character." Browning admits this in other words in a reference in a letter to Tennyson's *Holy Grail*:—

" Well, I go a long way with you in the feeling about Tennyson's new book ; it is all out of my head already. We look at the object of art in poetry so differently. There is an Idyll about a knight being untrue to his friend and yielding to the temptation of that friend's mistress after having engaged to assist him in his suit. I should judge the conflict in the knight's soul the proper subject to describe, not the effect of the moon on the towers, and anything *but* the soul."

With *Sordello*, " he at least believed in soul," and sought it in the meanest as well as in the finest of God's creatures. Even when love, as so frequently in his poems, is the dominant theme he is like Paracelsus, " I cannot feed on beauty for the sake of beauty alone, I must know," and even in them it is the capacity to love that matters. Nothing more beautiful can be found in poetry than Browning's love lyrics.

Too much has been said about Browning being an optimist, by which is meant a person who is unreasonably cheerful, who turns his back on danger and will not recognise both sides of a question. Browning, being a great poet, was necessarily an idealist and a man of penetrating vision but no complacent optimist. Carlyle declared that Life is no May game but a battle and a march. It was this and more to Browning, who was a born fighter, as Mr. Compton Rickett points out, and no gay troubadour dallying with pleasant emotions. He dealt courageously with the roughnesses and tangles of life, elected to " welcome each rebuff that turns earth's smoothness rough," asking in *Sordello* " For what is joy ? To heave up one obstruction more ? " a sane healthy courageous man, full of vitality, eager for the one fight more, the chance to prove his soul. A living critic who is somewhat of a poet has sneered at what he foolishly described as the false philosophy of Rabbi Ben Ezra, " Grow

old along with me, the best is yet to be, the last of life for which the first was made." One would be proud to grow old with a noble man like Ben Ezra or Browning, and only the very childish and self-centred can claim the best is behind and not before an eager striving soul, struggling through life towards some ultimate perfection.

A BEOWULF SCHOLAR.

The Finn Episode in *Beowulf*, an essay in interpretation by R. A. Williams, (Cambridge University Press, 10s. net), is a great tribute to its author's patient research, profound thought and penetrating insight and absolute conscientiousness. The Finn Episode is found in lines 1,063 to 1,151 of the Anglo-Saxon poem *Beowulf*. It has hitherto given rise to an immense amount of controversy, owing to its "allusiveness," and the fact that we do not *know* the things that the original hearers of the saga knew full well. And "our task," *i.e.*, of understanding, "is rendered particularly difficult by the fact that the story deals with two sets of people and their mutual relationship. Much that is said about one might be, for all we can see, equally said about either." Mr. Williams makes a gallant attempt to straighten out the tangle and to present us with a clear and satisfactory solution. Doubtless some of Mr. Williams's views will not prove acceptable to the dry-as-dust school of criticism, who "cannot see the wood for the trees." Chapter II, which is headed "Interpretation of the Episode," is a very fine piece of work. With the utmost thoroughness, the critic examines every line and every word. He is impatient of the iconoclastic textual critics, who, when they don't understand a word or phrase in the MS., promptly proceed to alter it. "Many of the textual problems which have been raised in regard to *Beowulf* are more like excuses for emendations, so called, than true problems." (p. 12).

Dr. Williams explains the ambiguity of the saga by the necessary "economy of language" experienced by the composer of *Beowulf*. The Episode is a "hurried affair." "It had to be, for, treated with the *Beowulf* poet's ordinary breadth of manner, the Finn saga would have offered matter enough for another long epic . . . . the poet has quickened his *fait* to lead us almost breathlessly through a side-alley." Hence all our troubles. Mr. Williams has done his work so well that it is a great pleasure to the amateur who has a quite cursory knowledge of Anglo-Saxon to pass with the writer through the tangled forest out into the sunny glades. No student of *Beowulf* can afford to ignore Mr. Williams's illuminating book.

ERNEST J. B. KIRTLAN, D.D.

THE PREMIUM EDITOR'S REPORT.

AS on one previous occasion, I am constrained to divide the premium among four entrants; they are Miss D. F. Radford (*The Visitors*), Miss Ethel Holdsworth (*Sonnet*), Miss Editha Jenkinson (*Fountains Abbey*) and *Philomel* (I heard a nightingale). Appreciative thanks to Barbara Smythe, Audrey Wrangham, Honor F. Leeke, Nancy Pollok and Joyce Harrison. Highly commended, with a copy of Dr. G. Hodgson's illuminating *Criticism as a Venture*, are Constance Harper (*Captive Moon*), Florence Overton (*Through the Oats*), Edith M. Walker (*To A Star*). Gertrude Pitt (*Green Fingers*), Ben Sowerby (*Mandragora*), and Glyde Robertson (*The Sidewalk Artist*). Commended: Mrs. E. Wieland, Helena Derezinska, U. F. B. Skimming, Gertrude Callaghan, Audrey Bell, M. Sturdy Smith, "Editha Melbourne," M. A. Holyoake, A. E. Mackay, Joy Malden, Noel Allport, P. Elsley, K. Munday and Phyllis Hastings.

I select the following two criticisms of the verses set in our last issue:—

"In these verses the detailed description of a somewhat complicated game distracts the reader's attention and the metaphor tends to obscure the meaning. The poem shows a sense of drama and progresses to a climax that would be satisfactory were it indisputable, but can we say whether or not death so seldom 'plays fair'? 'Younglings rare' is an ugly phrase, and in the last verse the long A vowel sound occurs five times in three short lines."—NANCY POLLOK.

"The first verse is a complete thing, conceived of a real emotional impulse and triumphantly created; it is genuine art; the climax is terrific. Unfortunately, though it is great art, it is not poetry; and 'Willow Catkin' is a poet: so, although the impulse is spent, he carries on with several more stanzas which (as you said at the Poets' Fellowship of certain of Miss Sitwell's verses) 'are not poetry, though only a poet could have written them.' They are neat and ingenious, but conceits are no substitute for creative emotion."—HOLM OAK.

It is true that even prophets can "prophesy falsely." Our familiar friends will long have realised that for us no poem is depreciated or raised in value by its signature. That is one reason why I was surprised to receive the following letters, neither accompanied by stamp or international stamp-coupon:—

"1-7-25.

"Dear Friend,—Will thee please publish *Sweet Dreams of Paradise* and send me a copy with it in and a check at usual rates for well known authors? If thee does not use it please return it so I can

send it elsewhere; but I very much hope thee will use it and that I shall hear from thee soon. With best wishes, I am, Thine truly, . . . "

"7-9-25.

"Dear Friend,—Will you please let me know whether you have or intend to publish my poem, *Sweet Dreams of Paradise*, sent you 1-7-25? If so, will you please send me a copy and check as I have never received any nor heard from you about it? If you hold it longer please *send me a check now and a copy as soon as published.* Will you please publish *Ever My Own* and *send me a check now at usual rates for well known authors and a copy as soon as published?* If you do not use it please return it so I can send it elsewhere, but I very much hope you will use it and that I shall hear from you soon. Yours truly, . . . " (The italics are the lady's.)

Both these letters would seem to have reached us well before they were posted, and perhaps our correspondent will read this in time to withdraw the second letter before it sets off. Neither of the poems is adequate to our standard, and that would remain true even if we agreed with their author as to her status in modern literature. When that is said, however, we still avow our gratitude and reverence for great poets, and we trust that none of them will ever receive a check from us. Here is a poem by one of them. Do not fear to send in criticisms as frank and free as if it had been written by someone of no literary fame whatsoever :—

SUMMER DAWN.

Pray but one prayer for me 'twixt thy closed lips;
Think but one thought of me up in the stars.
The summer night waneth, the morning light slips,
Faint and gray 'twixt the leaves of the aspen, betwixt the cloud-bars,
That are patiently waiting there for the dawn:
Patient and colourless, though Heaven's gold
Waits to float through them along with the sun.
Far out in the meadows, above the young corn,
The heavy elms wait, and restless and cold
The uneasy wind rises; the roses are dun;
Through the long twilight they pray for the dawn,
Round the lone house in the midst of the corn.
Speak but one word to me over the corn,
Over the tender, bowed locks of the corn.

POETRY PROBLEMS.—A BROWNING EXERCISE.

SOME years ago we attempted a series of poetry problem papers. They exhausted temporarily both setters and solvers. Some of the latter have recovered their mental energy, and think, as readers of the POETRY REVIEW who do not indulge in verse-writing, they have some claim to consideration as well as the poets who are offered an increasing number of "premiums." In consequence we are making a new departure, and are able to devote £5 (25 dollars) left over from a recent Sonnet competition and a number of books, including copies of Dr. Geraldine Hodgson's admirable *Criticism at a Venture* (10s. 6d.), which deals with poetic tendencies and appreciations, as prizes in a series of new problems papers. How the prizes will be allocated will be announced in our next issue. Till then we ask readers to exercise their ingenuity in solving during the holidays the original cross-word puzzle which constitutes in itself a not too difficult examination in the poems of Robert Browning. We are fortunate in being able to present this single-poet puzzle by "Torquemada"—the *nom-de-plume* of a well-known man of letters closely associated with poetry—whose competitive problems in *The Weekly Westminster* have enhanced the already high reputation of that paper's unique Problem Page. "Torquemada's" "Cross Words in Rhyme for Those of Riper Years," which have converted many men and women of intelligence from their contempt for the ordinary cross-word craze, have been published in book form (Routledge) with full explanatory notes, forming a small reference library in which the solver is reminded of or introduced to much excellent writing, quaint fact and humorous fancy. These twelve collected puzzles are full of diverting and bewildering literary allusions, few lights being as simple as "A Scot who won the Newdigate and then Returned to talk of verse to younger men," or (when we know the author, to whose identity it is a clue, and the solution) "Consent to drop your circle and you'll be A substance praised in Chinese poetry." If you are not acquainted already with these puzzling cross-words for riper years—they will test the cleverness of the portentous critic who is inclined to dismiss as "childish" whatever is not dull and solemn in literature—you will be grateful for our own specially composed introduction to them, and will not find the Browning test frivolous although it should be stimulating. "Torquemada," in evolving this Browning cross-word for us, has thought it fairer to keep to the actual *words* in the poems than to ask general questions. As the key will be published in our next issue, solutions should reach us before October 30th, together with such answers to the supplementary questions as competitors care to

attempt. One "problem" in "B" and "C" should be attempted to qualify for a prize.

(B) Give a list of 12 sonnets dealing specifically with a city or town; the selection should not be confined to English places only.

(2) Indicate in order of merit the 12 best poems (in your opinion) in the Summer Number of *Poetry of To-day*.

(C) *The New Readers' Shakespeare*, edited by G. B. Harrison, M.A., and F. R. Pritchard (Harrap & Co., 1s. 6d. per volume), presents the plays of Shakespeare as literature rather than as matter for linguistic or antiquarian study. Accordingly the editors have disregarded the usual scene headings and stage directions (mostly the work of laborious editors in the days of Queen Anne), and have given a setting to the plays in the manner of modern dramatists, being particularly influenced by the method of Mr. Bernard Shaw. This descriptive style adds piquancy to our reading, which is further stimulated by a series of suggestive questions appended to each play. We adopt several of them for our exercises:—

(1) Which of the battle speeches of Henry do you find the most stirring? Describe it from the point of view of one who heard it at the time of its first delivery. (*King Henry the Fifth.*)

(2) Compose a suitable obituary notice of "Davy Gam," Esquire, who died at Agincourt.

(3) Some critics say that Shylock was a man of one idea. Hazlitt, on the contrary, says "he has more ideas than any other person in the play." What is your opinion?

(4) Does Bassanio deserve Portia?

(5) Why does Viola talk to the Duke in blank verse in Act 2, Scene 4, and to the Clown in prose in Act 3, Scene 1? (*Twelfth Night.*)

A CROSS-WORD EXAMINATION ON THE WORKS OF ROBERT BROWNING.

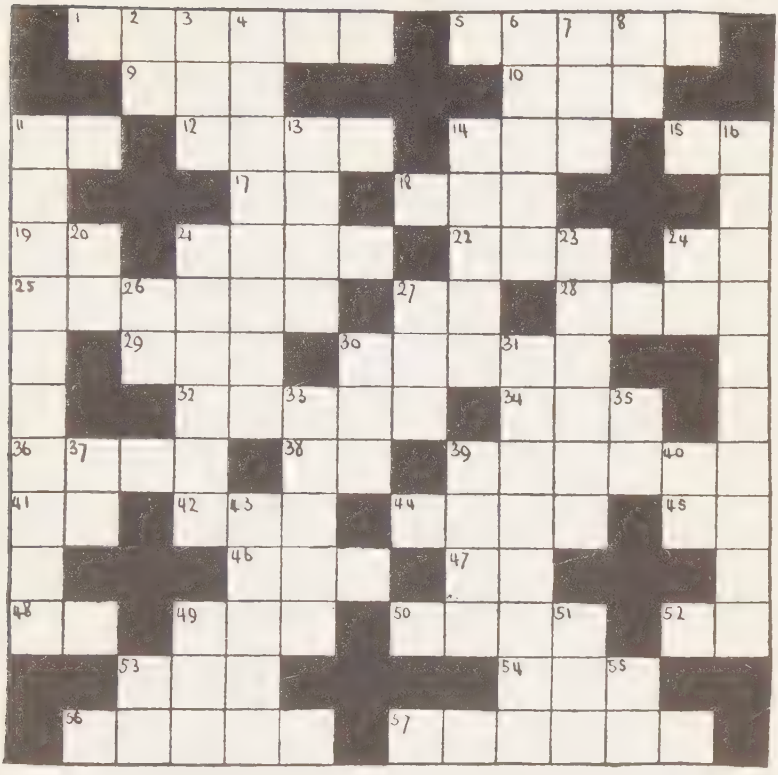
By "Torquemada."

HORIZONTAL.

1. I have a Greek-nymph nose; each ear is cut
Thin as a rose carved from a cocoa-nut.

5. This business was settled—let it be!—
By one who verged upon senility.

9. I, broken-hearted, was undone
Before God fashioned star or sun.



10. Anything like my sound would cause increase
In the heart's action of a man obese.

11. First and last letters of a ghost whose head
(He's twice a craftsman) wears a cap of red.

12. Deals with the darker side of chemistry—
Initials of the first four words am I.

14. Here you will find a mixture of the tale
Of what the swallow set upon the rail.

15. Initials of a dramatist who got
From Browning a suggestion for a plot.

17. Take the first capitals, and nothing more,
In so-called sonnet, of lines one and four.

18. If this was all the Latin he could speak,
The painter could have hardly had less Greek.

19. To this the man who was no fool in 8
Attained, with other guerdons of the great.

21. To this one time you must append a lot
To find a skin which Prospero had got.

22. What the Pannonian was: I am
Its anagram.

24. Of him the very first and last am I
Who sent to fetch curative minstrelsy.

25. It seems my wisdom lies in singing
Each song twice from the beginning.

27. The first three beings mentioned have, by chance,
These same initials: seek them in Provence.

28. First letters of the first four words you need,
In invitation to bestride a steed.

29. By three the number of the slaves divide
That turned the Deacon off his toasted side.

30. From me o'er harp-top bends the nymph,
As the dry limpet for the lymph.

32. They plagued, a band of Greeks upon the sea,
The pilot's old experience: "Cos or—Me?"

34. One shall propose with scarce an "*issimo*"
To make the Bell-Tower's me *altissimo*.

36. Of the two separate ways of me
The second is the harder, you'll agree.

38. The first word of a monorhyme
Where hoofs are beating all the time.

39. Now read a tragedy :
John's rose of sulphur I.

41. His head and tail, who, when his thirst he slakes,
Short work of Pussyfoot refreshment makes.

42. A certain person styled *in partibus*
Episcopus, addressed an author thus.

44. There is a pigeon from the myrrhy lands
Me by the whirlblast to fierce Scythian strands.

45. Reversed initials—one who sung :
" As when a queen, long dead, was young."

46. A six-foot tube will span successfully
The space from me to me.

47. You will find hair cloth and this lettering
And juice of terebinth on the same thing.

48. He said me, so the madman saith,
Who raised the madman out of death.

49. Who fetched a plate of graven lead : I am
His anagram.

50. Stand still and let me draw you, Browning said,
And so I stand, I stand upon my head.

52. Add 48 to me and you will know
One who's both Dante and Boccaccio.

53. What 49 Across did to obtain
The plate (arranged in the same way again).

54. He bade do me to soft white things that crept
To keep 10 company while Florence slept ;

56. And from a cleric's me he chose to paint
Herodias and a delightful saint.

57. In second way of 36 you'll see
That electricity is death to me.

VERTICAL

2. Before a gondola, before a year,
Before three days, you'll find that I appear.

3. Of 54 and 56 the he
Hard by St. Laurence came abreast of me.

4. Rarer and I
Becomes man's thought on high.

6. He who loved Cotnar said he would, as I,
Find a snug place beneath a hedge to die.

7. Clapped upon salt, I am one reason given
He can't afford the place he wants to live in.

8. None dubs him dunce; I was their miss and loss.
(Could but have happened 21 Across.)

11. I shrieked when a young duchess came to stay
First at the place from which she ran away.

13. According to the letter he's inditing
Here's a disease the doctor cured by writing.

14. He round whose resting place the curlew darts
Said me the whole, before you make the parts.

16. First name of one so good at grave and gay
That people left off talk to hear him play.

20. James Lee
Begins with me.

21. First trace the Horizontal to its mine:
One of these things occurs in the next line.

23. On yellow sheaves of me to rest
Or swim in lucid shallows, which were best?

24. I stand for that which stands before the man
Suggested in a glory, with one Pan. . . .

26. He must have had strong quarters, you will own,
I'm the first third of him to reach the town.

27. He who thought dinner sets the spirit free
With " as we say at Rome " made use of me.

30. He'd whisper us when someone did
Walk up and down Valladolid.

31. Guizot receives Montalembert,
And down the court we flare.

33. The rain was I before a grim affair
In which a girl was strangled with her hair.

35. Initials : first two words, excluding prose,
Which you must read to learn about John's rose.

37. Their eyes might stretch to us and strain,
If he but hugged the wall when in the lane.

39. Half of a hyphened place associated
With one who had no pocket moon, he stated.

40. " Only they sneer, make light of—one may say
Nibble at what you do." Initials, pray !

43. " We mortals cross the ocean of this world
Each in " what's here into confusion hurled.

49. Branched through and through with many a vein
Of me's one red drear burnt-up plain.

51. A shape of hat that Œdipus might wear
When pouncing on the Sphinx in Leicester Square.

53. In grief because a god grants one of three
Wishes, a goddess twice makes use of me.

55. I stand on left hand and on right
Of town where Loire and sea unite.

NEW PREMIUM COMPETITIONS:

150 DOLLARS FOR NEW POEMS.

MR. HENRY WOODHOUSE, V.P., the editor and proprietor of "The Scientific Age," in appreciation of a recent article in THE POETRY REVIEW on the relation of Poetry to Science by our Verse Editor, Dr. O. C. de C. Ellis (who, by-the-way, is reading a paper on "Flame" at the Southampton meeting of the British Association), has authorised our American Editor to offer fifty dollars (£10) for a poem celebrating scientific effort and achievement, or supporting the assertion that "poetry is the experience of the attainment of knowledge which science pursues," reconciling poetry with science, discovery with vision. These poems on science should not exceed 80 lines—sonnets would be preferred.

Mrs. Lucien H. Tyng provides through Mrs. Bartlett a premium of 50 dollars (£10) for a poem, in any form, on a domestic pet, or in praise of dog or cat.

Details of the Laighton "Illusion" sonnet contest were announced in our last issue.

These competitions are restricted to members of The Poetry Society, or annual postal subscribers to THE POETRY REVIEW, resident in any part of the world. They remain open until December 15th. Entries must be addressed to Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett, American Editor, "Poetry Review," 299, Park Avenue, New York City, U.S.A., in envelopes endorsed "Science," "Tyng," or "Illusion" respectively. MSS. in these competitions addressed to the London office will not be forwarded, but will be disqualified.

We understand that a bequest, which we trust will not become available for many years, of ten thousand dollars has been made to the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW, on behalf of The Poetry Society, for the development and continuance of these international poetry contests. This trust fund will operate under certain conditions expressed by the donor and imposed on the Editor.

* * * *

The usual general premium of £2 for the best poem or poems submitted to the Premium Editor during the month (without limitation of subject) is continued, and six books will be awarded to the "highly commended."

Not more than *two* poems may be submitted at the same time.

Every entry must be certified as original and as not having appeared in print, and the name and address of the competitor must be attached to the MS.

If criticism is desired, 2s. 6d. and a stamped addressed envelope

must be enclosed. (If a more detailed postal criticism is desired, 5s. and a stamped addressed envelope should be sent.)

Entries must be either typewritten or written in ink on one side of the paper only, and contributors must be members of the Poetry Society or registered postal subscribers to THE POETRY REVIEW.

All MSS. submitted for premium awards should be addressed to "The Premium Editor," POETRY REVIEW Office, before October 1st, accompanied by stamped addressed envelope.

CHILDREN AND TENNYSON.

IN the Young People's Verse Contest the holidays have interrupted both participation and adjudication. The MSS. received, together with later contributions, will be dealt with in our next number. Some reference was made in our last issue to the recognition by teachers and others of the importance of this feature, which takes into account the modern realisation of the value of self-expression, sympathetically directed. The writing of English verse has never been more widely practised or more sensibly appreciated. Instead of making poor poets, as some critics fear, it tends to eliminate the feeble versifier through the acquisition of a due regard for the difference between verse and poetry, an actual experience of verse forms and construction, a knowledge of technique, a trained sense of the significance of words and of the use of the right words in the right order, as well as the cultivation of observation, a keener perception of beauty, a developed receptivity of ideas and the refined discipline of emotions. In consequence from the younger generation may be expected a greater regard for poetry, a more intelligent appreciation of it, the development of a finer taste and of "a clearer deeper sense of the best in poetry and of the strength and joy to be drawn from it," thus realising better than anything else can do the basic objects of the Poetry Society and completely justifying the Society's existence and policy. We hope to be able to record shortly a considerable extension of the Young People's Verse Contests, which, in various forms, have deeply concerned us for many years. Together with the verse-speaking examinations, they constitute the best possible introduction to poetry, and their extension and influence will have notable effect on the Society's development when the present generation passes out of the school age. The English mistress of one large college, who is a vice-president of the Society, recognising its value over that of other organisations, considers that all her 900 girls might join the Society individually in their respective parts of the world when they pass out of college. This reasoned opinion from an

expert authority indicates the enormous sphere of influence exercised by and through the Society, the effect of sympathetic, discreet, persistent co-operation.

This month our consideration and awards are confined to the Tennyson essay competition. Mr. W. F. Rawnsley, at whose suggestion this scheme was adopted, has acted as adjudicator. He expresses appreciation of the high general standard reached by Felixstowe, Clifton Downs, all the essays submitted showing individual interest in and knowledge of the life and poetry of Lord Tennyson. To this school the group prize of a Lucchesi bust of Tennyson is awarded, with the following individual awards :—

1st : Romola McKinnon (14).

2nd : Doreen Davis (16).

Highly Commended : Grace Richards, Betty Palk, S. Stevens.

The appreciations received from Lawnside, Malvern, deserve special mention. Here essays by girls of 8 and 10 were very pleasing and worthy of commendation. The following particular awards are made :—

1st : Winifred Gray (16).

2nd : Georgina Manley (15).

3rd : Pat Cartridge (14).

Mr. Rawnsley's special prize for excellence : Vesper Hunter (11).

Highly Commended : Helen Braid (16), Barbara Bonner (15), Barbara Webster (14), Mary Toppin (8).

Mr. Rawnsley, in his report, adds :

"The Felixstowe Essays gave a full account of Tennyson's early life which was mostly accurate. I read some thirty of these and thought them remarkably good, for the most part. It is always interesting to me to see how well the younger girls do, and in this school I put a girl of fourteen first. I should like to go through most of the papers with the writers, pointing out inaccuracies, etc., and commenting on the work, and I will try to do this in the course of next term, if agreeable to Miss Nott. The Lawnside School mostly called their papers ' an appreciation of Tennyson,' and quite properly said little of his early life and more of the individual poems which they had evidently read with care. The best work was naturally done by girls of sixteen. But I was so struck by the excellence of Vesper Hunter's paper, a girl of eleven, that I offer a special prize to her, and I was interested to see that girls of ten did good work, and that even a girl of eight was able to write quite well."

This Young People's Verse section will be continued from issue to issue until further notice ; for particulars see previous issues.

THE POETRY SOCIETY AT ALDWORTH.

A WHOLE issue would be necessary to report the proceedings of and record the impressions made by the visit of the Poetry Society to Aldworth as the guests of H.H. the Maharajah Gaekwar of Baroda on July 11—the most perfect Saturday of the summer. The glorious sunshine, succeeding days of the gloom, was the one essential to the success of this most memorable pilgrimage—the realisation of a delightful thought by the princely owner of Tennyson's old home who brought East and West together in common love and reverence for the great poet and the associations immortalised by his presence—and we were greatly blessed. We saw Tennyson's Surrey home under the most favourable and happiest auspices and our fellowship was crowned by a golden day, perfect and deeply impressive in every detail.

We shrink from using up the limited space of an ordinary number, although all participants and the very much larger number of non-participants among our membership will desire to have some record of an unique event. We would like to quote from innumerable newspaper descriptions, but must content ourselves with some sentences from the charming appreciation of the *Manchester Guardian*. In the course of a special report of a "Day of Memories at Aldworth," the famous paper's representative wrote: "It was a golden afternoon. This delightful piece of cultivation in among the bracken and heather and clustering pines seemed a perfect expression of the spirit of the artist who spent a long life in the sedulous perfection of oases of refined words. In the rich sunshine the terrace had a curiously Italian look. There were the scarlet flowers blazing on the balustrade where he loved to see them against 'the blue of fifty miles away.' Tall cypress-like trees flank the terrace, and between them you gaze at that wonderful view across the chequered green of the Sussex weald to the grey-blue of Chanctonbury Ring and the South Downs. English as the scene is, one could easily imagine oneself looking down from the terrace of a villa raised over the Lombardy plain. . . .

"Aldworth is hidden by trees, and when you come out unexpectedly on the terrace the first sight of that magnificent expanse seawards almost takes the breath away. There is a touch of magic about it, as in all sudden revelations. Here is the perfect setting for the sensitively secluded figure. With the help of the reminiscences of surviving friends it was easy to realise amazingly the picture of the poet in his cloak and hat and prophetic beauty pacing the terrace or the little grassy circles sheltered from all winds. . . . Here the great man received his famous contemporaries and paced with them on the terrace lawns. Here he was surrounded by that atmosphere of

reverence and worship in which he became enlarged to something legendary—the perfect type of poet and mage—in the eyes of our fathers.

" On the bowling green where Tennyson loved to sit the visitors gathered to listen to reminiscences of him and to readings of his poems. Mr. W. F. Rawnsley, who was actually present at Tennyson's wedding in 1850 and who often visited him at Aldworth, gave us some glimpses of the great man among his friends. There are few traces of Aldworth in the poems, but Mr. Rawnsley could tell us that the line ' How sweetly smells the honeysuckle in the hushed night ' was a memory of the garden where we sat, and that the dedication to his last volume, *The Death of Oenone*, is Blackdown in verse. . . . It was Mr. Rawnsley who gave Tennyson the big wolfhound which gazes up at him in the memorial statue at Lincoln—the work of G. F. Watts, whose widow was present at this notable meeting (together with Mrs. Holman Hunt, another vice-president). ' The last time I saw him he was sitting under that tree with Mrs. Allingham, who painted such beautiful water colour pictures,' said Mr. Rawnsley, pointing to a noble cedar surrounded by velvet shade. This was the prelude to an anecdote illustrating Tennyson's courtliness. How strange it seemed and new ! We all turned and gazed at the cedar tree as if we might by sheer gazing call him back to his beloved garden."

Miss Alys Buckton, of *Eagerheart* fame, took up the tale of reminiscences of the poet, whom she knew intimately as a child at Haslemere. We hope on a later occasion to have the privilege of publishing Miss Buckton's story of her early friendship, which cannot be summarised effectively in this brief report. During the afternoon one of her Glastonbury pupils, Mdlle. Anna Varenska, a young dancing pupil of Saracco, former Ballet Master of the Scala and Director of the Imperial Ballet at Moscow, charmingly gave a number of well-studied interpretations of some of Tennyson's poems, accompanied on the clarionet by Miss Margaret King, and the lyrics spoken by Miss Buckton—a ravishingly picturesque interlude.

An Unique Tribute by Sir William Watson.

The proceedings were distinguished by an unique tribute to their distinctive character. The occasion brought Sir William Watson from his seclusion to read his stately elegy to the " Master who crown'st our immelodious days, with flower of perfect speech." Moreover, this was the first time Sir William had read from his own poems in public. The event made so strong and personal, albeit embarrassing, claim upon him that he felt it demanded his participa-

tion and departure from custom. His pertinent preface to his impressive reading of *Lachrimae Musarum* was so peculiar to the occasion that it must be recorded here. Sir William pointed out that when Tennyson died, nearly 33 years ago, he was a young man of 34, and during the 10 or 15 preceding years he could not say that he was among Tennyson's most fervid admirers, although very sensitive to his infinite charms and to the power which frequently accompanied that charm. But his own idolatries were reserved rather for a more compressed and pregnant style than that which Tennyson habitually cultivated. However, when he died, and died that magnificently spectacular death, like the death of some great mighty, half-mythical poet of antiquity, those of them who had carped and cavilled during his lifetime were caught up, as it were, and carried out of themselves by a great surge of emotion, for they all felt that Tennyson had been a great part of their lives, their intellectual, emotional, and moral lives, and when he died it was as the passing away of a great presence. And the surging wave of emotion which carried them out of themselves at that time might have caused some of them to utter themselves with a degree of enthusiasm which was perhaps not quite normal, but might nevertheless have been quite sincere. His own elegy on Tennyson was written in three days and was written under the stress of that surging wave, but it was written with great sincerity. For an elegy was not a criticism or an attempt to form a scrupulously balanced estimate of a man's work, or life, or career, or character. The things most fitting, at any rate, where the subject of it was a great poet, were reverence, homage, and love.

As President of the Senior Centre of the Society, the Rev. A. H. Lee, of Hampstead, expressed the thanks of the Society to His Highness for his hospitality and the singularly happy and appropriate thought that had prompted it. In an eloquent speech Mr. Lee pointed out the significance of the gathering which illustrated the universality and unity of the Poetry Society. Members of many Centres, some from great distances, had had the fortunate opportunity of meeting together as members of a great fellowship, and in addition, members from India, Canada, the United States, China and Japan had been able to accept the greatly appreciated invitation. He pointed out, too, that Tennyson was not on his trial and needed no defence—the carping criticism of little minds left undimmed the lustre of his fame.

Mr. Rawnsley handed to the Gaekwar's agent, Mr. B. W. Horne, a replica of the Lucchesi bust of Tennyson for presentation to his Highness, with a message of profound appreciation of his eminently

practical and valued devotion to Tennyson and his associations, expressed in the care with which those grounds, which were a national asset, had been restored and preserved. Mr. Horne was thanked personally for the meticulous attention he had given to all details connected with the visit, doing everything possible to secure the comfort and pleasure of the guests, for whose conveyance from Haslemere station and entertainment at Aldworth, including the preparation of plans of the grounds and the provision of experienced guides, with Miss Buckton as chief cicerone, elaborate arrangements had been made.

The formal proceedings were fittingly concluded with the singing of " Crossing the Bar " by the Lady Maud Warrender—a moving and impressive finale. A further opportunity was given for the inspection of the grounds under the guidance of Miss Buckton, who pointed out paths and views and nooks intimately associated with the poet's sojourn there, and plucked for the Overseas visitors leaves from the Italian laurel planted by Garibaldi, which provided the wreath that lay on the coffin of the poet when it was borne away by the villagers down the hillside a generation ago. The day was too short, too crowded, for a full realisation of the beauty and significance of the place, which aroused emotions to be remembered in tranquillity, too deep and spiritual to be discussed. They are summarised in restrained and sensitive language, together with the sense of many prose expressions of appreciation received from participants, in the following lines by Miss Florence Coates :—

We who that day stood on the terraced height
And looked upon that immemorial view,
And saw " Green Sussex fading into blue,"
For one rapt moment in our spirit's flight
Visioned the radiance of the Poet's light.

And we who heard the echoes of his tongue
In hymnal joys from myriad tiny throats,
We knew the singer of their joyous notes.
Who in this hallowed spot his raptures flung,
And lives immortal by the songs he sung.

And we who trod the Poet's circle green,
Where he has left his footsteps for all time,
And in his solitudes framed thoughts sublime,
We felt his spirit quicken us unseen,
And glimpsed what beauty in his soul had been.

And with our beings steeped in mystic wine
Trod from the wine press of the Gods of Song—
With the afflatus of the ages long—
Soared to the heights of Poesy divine,
Here at the altar in this woodland shrine.

Aldworth as a National Possession.

We can quote only one editorial comment on this event, which had a national importance and significance—again the *Manchester Guardian :*

" Many of those who spent a delightful afternoon at Aldworth reflected that it would be a princely way of perpetuating his name in England if this enlightened Maharajah were to hand Aldworth over to national keeping or to make it easy for the nation to acquire it. It is a place of extreme beauty, and its associations with the great Victorian time would make it a precious public possession if Blackdown can be preserved from the villa builder, who has done his worst with parts of Hindhead. The Poetry Society's great gathering is one sign that the reaction against Tennyson, so natural after the adulation of his own time, is spending itself. The people who run the Poetry Society, and who are in a position to feel the poetic pulse of the country, report a distinct Tennyson revival among the young. It is no longer fashionable to dismiss him with a sneer about ' boudoir epics ' and so on. His serene and perfect artistry is more and more admired in an age that is tiring of vagrant experiment. Aldworth is worth preserving as the perfect expression of the Tennysonian grand style, which has nothing pompous about it."

Several London members propose to make a private pilgrimage to Aldworth on a September Saturday.

HOW TO WRITE A POEM.

AT the third meeting of the Poet's Fellowship (Northern Circle) on July 11th, in the Manchester Social Club, Dr. O. C. de C. Ellis told " How to Write a Poem." Mr. J. W. Aizlewood, president of the Sheffield Centre, was in the chair. Dr. Ellis commenced with a discussion of critics and their methods, and continued: " There is but one judge whose name is legion : it is the reader, and the reader must be independent and subjective in his appreciation, his tastes and his criticisms, or he will never be sincere." With regard to subject-matter, " the true poet sees beauty in reality ; he does not depend on fable and fancy for it. . . . The discovery of beauty in everything is a possible fallacy. The finest poetry . . . is the fruit of some strange and moving experience . . . strangely

and movingly expressed." Coming to form, the lecturer said "it is generally accepted that emotion generates rhythm of speech," and suggested the writing of the last line first, the last line containing the crux of the subject-matter. When writing a poem, the poet should consult his notebook, where "he will find the jewels with which to stud his verses." In this connection G. K. Chesterton, Masefield and Swinburne were quoted. Fourteen essential points, which included fitness, compression, expansion, were outlined. "Poetry which breaks out into capital letters in the middles of lines and loses them at the beginnings is . . . poetry disguised in spats and a monocle." Emphasis was laid on the avoidance of heavy and ugly words. In conclusion, Dr. Ellis said: "If a man has not soaked himself in the Elizabethans and Victorians, how *dare* he write?" The general opinion was that the paper was so comprehensive and covered such enormous ground in so short a time that points for discussion were difficult to lay hold upon. Mr. Aizlewood remarked that inter-penetration was necessary to the writing of poetry. Miss Knowles, secretary of the Manchester Centre, put forth the theory that as civilisation advances, poetry declines. Perfectly-balanced education will find room for both intellect and emotion. Mr. Conrad Hartley said that the greatest poetry has come through emotion. Poetic treatment will glorify any subject. Miss Frampton touched on the difficulty of putting wordless inspiration into words. Mrs. Coppack's comments resolved themselves into a vote of thanks to Dr. Ellis, who admitted that he had never used his own complete recipe!

* * *

At the May meeting of the London section of the Poets' Fellowship—THE POETRY REVIEW and P.T. contributors' club—Col. Arthur Lynch initiated a discussion on revision, illustrated from his close acquaintance with the major poets. Victor Ballan, whom cricket kept away, contributes an individual note.

Poetry, to my mind, is much like the umpire's fiat, the spontaneous answer to a babel of voices, often needing heavy revision if he is overborne by the clamour, and negligent of the rules of the game. There is no such thing as a poet without brains. If so-called "inspiration" is everything then Balaam's ass was a poet of the highest order; it didn't wait to think, and didn't know what it was talking about.

Imagination is a form of inspiration; but the vision must be clad in words—not the first which rush into the mind. Rich thought should be sumptuously clad; sombre thought in solemn sounds; sprightly

conceits in nimble lines; peaceful dreams in restful metre—and so on. We have a very ample vocabulary from which to draw, as the painter has innumerable colours and tones by which to reveal his mind. Simplicity may be overdone, resulting in a flat monochrome; yet it may be a useful first sketch for the finished picture. It should not be the last. We all like colour, and poetry is but painting ideas in words instead of pigment.

This necessitates thought; consequently, revision; often the toning down of high colours—the elimination of purely showy words which compel attention without exciting admiration—like a red dab on the end of a nose.

The charm of spontaneity is often the result of careful consideration and sound judgment in revision. On the other hand, a good phrase may tumble into the mind one knows not how or whence and should not be altered; the context must be altered to fit it—again, *revision.*

I think that many of those who write good poetry for P.T. would write better if they took more pains. There seems to be a certain crudity, a primitiveness, about some of the work. Again, *au contraire*, in an American article in THE POETRY REVIEW a certain lady informed us that a certain—or uncertain—poem was "*highly formalized*," "13–7, 13–7, 13–3." Having read the production I would with deference suggest to the author that the paper on which it was written was also "*highly inflammable*," and revision should begin at the back of the fireplace. To sum up, poets should remember that a poem is a picture painted in music. And who can play the gamut of the rainbow without an error which needs revision?

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At the second meeting of the Northern Group of the Poets' Fellowship—held, by the kindness of Mr. J. W. Aizlewood (President of the Sheffield Poetry Club), at the Bungalow, Ranmoor, Sheffield—Manchester, Sheffield, Bolton, Blackburn, Wakefield, Heanor, Howden, Horwich and Romiley were represented. The chair was taken by Mr. Conrad Hartley, Romiley. Miss Taylor read a paper on "Poetry and Cities." She showed how much attracted to and influenced by cities many poets and writers had been. Charles Lamb "did not want to die and leave the streets." Mark Rutherford said half an hour's rational conversation was better than a long walk by the sea. Wordsworth, who was not a city poet, felt the beauty of the city when he wrote the famous sonnet on London Bridge. In the ancient cities of Greece and of Egypt the people felt that their poetry would fit in with the city and become a part

of the city life. London, in Shakespeare's time, and later in the time of Pope, was still of the country, as well as of the town. All culture centred in the city. It was the Poets' centre. Miss Taylor went on to discuss the far reaching effect of the industrial revolution in England during the last century. It meant a break between country and town. Speaking of the present time we were justified in expecting better things, and could hope to make buildings more noble and gardens more green for our descendants. In the course of the discussion Dr. Ellis spoke of G. K. Chesterton's description of London as "a string of thirteen or fourteen vulgar towns." He said the trouble was that town-dwellers idealised the country unconvincingly, while country dwellers tended not to idealise it at all. This applied equally, *mutatis mutandis*, to the poetry of the town. Mr. Aizlewood quoted a striking line from Tennyson's early prize poem *Timbuctoo*—"I saw a wilderness of spires." The Chairman said he was chiefly concerned with one thing—the attitude of the poet towards the city. A poet might write of an ugly thing if he saw what was behind it, and the hope behind it.

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The Kensington Centre autumn arrangements are :—

October 1st.—Mrs. Lambert Lack, "Poets of the Past," 24, Ladbroke Road, Notting Hill Gate.

October 15th.—Miss S. Watt, "Fra Filippo Lippi," 9, Sumner Place, South Kensington.

October 29th.—Mr. Galloway Kyle, "Some Tendencies," 30, Cranley Gardens, South Kensington.

November 12th.—Miss Smith Dampier, "Danish Ballads," 5, Roland Houses, South Kensington.

November 26th.—Dr. Ernest Kirtlan, "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," 4, Phillimore Gardens, Kensington.

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The Highgate Centre will resume for the autumn session on Monday, October 5th. The readings will be held on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month at 8 p.m., at the Literary Institute, South Grove, Highgate, N.6. The following programme has been arranged :—

October 5th.—Lecture Recital, Miss Nellie Sargent.

October 19th.—"Kipling."

November 2nd.—"W. B. Yeats," Miss Bodkin.

November 16th.—Poems on "Children."

The Hon. Secretary (Mrs. Bouman, 10, Stanhope Road, N.6.) will be pleased to hear from any wishing to join the Centre.

THE POETRY SOCIETY IN INDIA.

THE *Sind Observer* of July 3rd stated: The Poetry Society, with its headquarters in London, has branches throughout the English-speaking world; its aim is to stimulate the study of good poetry, to create a living world of beauty, to bring some rays of light into the mind of men and to make them the living stuff of their lives. It is a society of people who are not content to live by bread alone, but by word.

Mr. and Mrs. Kazi, of Khairpur, have been active in our midst for some time to form a Centre of the Poetry Society in Karachi, for which purpose they came down from Khairpur. The readers of the *Sind Observer* are well acquainted with Mrs. Kazi as a poetess whose verses of thoughtful beauty have often been published in these columns. Mr. Kazi is well learned in oriental and occidental lore and a philosopher himself. Philosophy and poetry have met together in this family. Both of them are members of the London society.

Mr. Sohrab Katrak, who combines business with poesy, has been hard at work in helping the Kazis to form a branch of the Poetry Society here. Last Wednesday evening a meeting was held to discuss the formation of the society. Eventually it was resolved to start a branch in Karachi, and about twenty-two persons enrolled themselves as members.

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The meetings of the Manchester Centre will reopen on October 1st with a social evening at The Social Club, Lower Mosley Street, and the following fixtures have been arranged for that month :—

October 8th : " Thos. Hardy." Mr. R. Waller, M.A.
„ 16th : " Victor Hugo." Mrs. J. A. Davidson.
„ 28th : " The Supernatural in Fiction." Mr. Walter de la Mare.

Further meetings will be announced in the November POETRY REVIEW. Members are asked to kindly return library books on October 8th, when it is hoped that the library will be established in the new quarters at The Social Club. Books sent by post should be addressed to the Hon. Librarian and Secretary, Miss Annie L. Knowles, 106, Devonshire Street, Higher Broughton, Manchester, who will be pleased to enrol new members.

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During the past session of the Wimbledon Centre Mrs. Alfred Lampson spoke on " Music and Poetry." Songs by Miss Joan Sheppard ably illustrated the comparisons drawn by the lecturer between rhythm in music and verse. Mr. A. R. Wills, President of the Centre, gave, at his own house, an illuminating lecture on

" Swinburne, the Man and the Poet." The members listened to the melody of the poet's verses and the lecturer's informative comments in a room overlooking the lake, where, at a spot now named " The Poets' Corner," Swinburne used to pause in his daily walk from The Pines, Putney.

The Autumn meetings will take place, at 8.15 p.m., the first and third Tuesday evenings of each month. The first will be on October 6th, at The Wilderness, Wimbledon Common, when the Rev. C. Kynaston-Gaskell will give a Shakespeare reading, contrasting prose with verse.

On November 3rd, at Felday, Marryat Road, the Rev. U. C. Raad will lecture on " The Mysticism of Blake."

Particulars of other meetings, etc., may be had on application to the Hon. Sec., Mrs. A. T. Wright, 4, Alan Road, Wimbledon, S.W.19.

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The meetings of the Golders Green Centre in future will be held at Woodstock School, Golders Green Road, N.W. (five minutes' walk from Tube station and on bus route), on the first and third Fridays of the month, at 8 p.m. The following programme has been arranged :—

October 2nd. Miscellaneous Poems.
„ 16th. Robert Bridges.
November 6th. Longfellow's *Spanish Student.*

Members are asked to make the meeting known among their friends. Further information respecting the meetings can be obtained from the Hon. Sec., 32, Camden Square, N.W.1.

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The Hampstead Centre of the Poetry Society will hold an " At Home " at 150, Finchley Road, N.W.3 (by the kind courtesy of Miss Julie Huntsman), on Saturday, September 26th, from 7.30 to 10 p.m., to which members and friends are invited, this being the usual and much appreciated introduction to the autumn meetings. The following programme has been arranged :—

October 6th. Soldiers.
„ 20th. John Masefield, including reading of *King Cole.*
November 3rd. Witches and Warlocks.

Full particulars of meetings can be obtained from the Hon. Sec., 32, Camden Square, N.W.1.

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Invitations to meetings of the Poets' Fellowship, the Writers' Centre of the Poetry Society, will be sent on application, as meetings in London and the Northern district are arranged.